



recap last 2 weeks.



- Widowed Naomi and widowed daughter-in-law Ruth return to Bethlehem in Judah from Moab with nothing.
- Bert discussed the women's trust in God's sovereignty.



- Ansy walked through ch 2.
- Ruth finds herself gleaning in the field of Boaz, a relative of Naomi's husband.
- Ruth is protected and blessed by Boaz's kindness
- We can also glean blessings from our redeemer, Jesus



Situation before Ch. 3

- The kindness shown by Boaz in Ch. 2 stops Ruth and Naomi from starving, but isn't a good quality existence.
- Reminder of Ruth's position in society as a foreign widow. Bottom of the pile.
- Besides, gleaning in Ch. 2 is temporary for the harvest season. Approx. 8 weeks (max) before Naomi/Ruth needed to find food again.
- Israelite tradition was that widows would be taken care of by their family, if they chose to redeem them by marriage, otherwise, back to scraps.
- Perhaps Boaz isn't thinking that anything would happen: he's a much older man (perhaps a similar age to Ruth's father-in-law Elimilech). We're not told why he notices Ruth—in Ch. 2 he shows her mercy, but this might not yet be a romantic gesture.
- Ch. 3 begins with Boaz threshing barley: end of harvest season. End of gleaning.

READ PASSAGE



The Plan

- Maslow's hierarchy of needs
- Physiological needs (food, water, shelter)
- Safety needs
- Love, Esteem and Self-actualisation the top 3 tiers.
- Naomi/Ruth currently at the bottom of the pyramid. Not even much security given that the harvest is coming to an end.
- They need more in order to do more than just survive.
- Naomi: 3:1 "My daughter, should I not seek rest for you?"
- Nothing much can be done by themselves. Recognise helplessness
- Naomi and Ruth take initiative (c.f. Leaving Moab in Ch. 1, and Ruth gleaning in Ch. 2) and decide to pursue a better life.



Seems like an odd plan for two defenceless women:

- Threshing happened outside the city, at night after the harvest, on a hill to let the night breeze sift out the chaff from the grain.
 - Typically done by the boss as too important to be left to workers.
 - Slept there to keep going through the night, and to protect against thieves.
 - Ruth told to go to a lonely, isolated place at night where there's a risk of thieves, to meet a man.
 - Told to wait for him to eat and drink (get drunk?), uncover his feet and to lie down.
 - Then asks him to cover her with his blanket!
 - Leaves in the morning before anyone sees!
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- What is happening here??
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- Traditionally servants would lie at their master's feet and be covered by the corner of their blankets. Ruth is reiterating the nature of the relationship.
 - 3:9 " I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer."
 - Not just a request for the blanket, but for the wings of protection mentioned by Boaz in 2:12
 - "...a full reward be given you by the LORD, the god of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."
 - A formal request for marriage and redemption.



Boaz's response

- Boaz again shows that he is a worthy redeemer.
- Has this young woman under a blanket, asking for marriage, totally alone, but chooses to not take advantage, and to protect her reputation.
- “You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. And now my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman.” 3:11-12
- Realises that things need to be done properly, discusses the closer redeemer, but promises to resolve in the morning. Either way, Ruth and Naomi will be looked after, even if it mean Boaz does not get to marry Ruth. True selflessness.
- Sends her home before anyone can see and start gossiping about what might have happened. Cares about her reputation.
- Immediately takes care of Naomi and Ruth by sending her back with as crazy amount of Barley—basically as much as Ruth could physically carry.
- 3:18 ends the chapter: “Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today.”
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Ruth shows intention

Three lessons from Ruth's behaviour here. Intention, vulnerability, confidence.

- Ruth's intention to secure her redemption meant that her and Naomi had to take action to achieve something.
- The offer of gleaning showed that Boaz was kind towards the family, but up to now, there isn't any sign of a deeper relationship.
- Boaz, a middle-aged man, isn't going to take it upon himself to pursue Ruth, a young woman. He might be rich, but Ruth has the potential to choose from the "young men, poor or rich" 3:11.
- Ruth chooses noble Boaz, not the strongest, most attractive man her age.
- Just like in her decision in Ch. 1 to stick with Naomi at her own detriment, here she chooses to preserve the line of her adoptive family over her own potential desires.
- Doesn't do it half-heartedly - she puts on her best clothes and perfume. She tries her hardest to gain Boaz's favour.
- Interview at UoB
 - Not dressed correctly
 - Not prepared
 - Didn't realise so much was expected of me
 - vs. Warwick interview
- A level student attitudes.
 - AS vs MN.
 - Intention explains a lot.



Boaz makes a promise to redeem

- All is futile if Boaz is not righteous and trustworthy.
- Action would go unnoticed.
- Humility would be used against her
- Confidence would leave her disappointed.
- But Boaz is righteous and trustworthy. He lives up to the name of kinsman-redeemer.
- Ruth puts her life in his hands and he delivers.
- Naomi: "The man will not rest but will settle the matter today." 3:18.
- We'll see in Ch. 4 how trustworthy Boaz is.

Communion

- Boaz is an excellent role model, but there is more at stake than just continuation of a family line or securing a middle-class existence.
- Greater than Boaz, Jesus is our kinsman-redeemer.
- Jesus is the real one who is righteous and trustworthy.
- Jesus takes notice of our actions
- Jesus responds to our humble position with compassion
- Jesus never fails, he is the one in who we can place our confidence.
- As we come to communion, like Ruth we need to ask and come before him, humble ourselves at his feet, and trust in his providence for our redemption.
- Like Boaz, "The man will not rest but will settle the matter **today**." 3:18.