

Minor Characters In Major Roles

Lesson 5 – Boaz

“For it is by [Jesus] that we have been redeemed and have had our sins forgiven.”

Col 1:14 (Phillips)

- Visitors, prayer requests, prayer

Acts and Facts

- “It is said of me 'He is a man of great wealth,' but I am just a Bethlehem farmer.”
- “Although I lived in the time of the Judges, I was very Christ-like”
- “I am the son of Rahab, the Canaanite harlot, and the great-grandfather of King David”
- “I married a woman much younger than I, a foreigner from Moab named Ruth”
- “I am called the kinsman Redeemer”

Q: <thought question>

Background

1. **Famine** in Bethlehem (12th century BC)
 - a. Elimelech takes his family to **Moab**
 - i. Elimelech = "My God is King"
 - ii. Naomi = "Pleasant; Lovely"
 - iii. Chilion = "Pining" [yearning]
 - iv. Mahlon = "Puny"
 - b. Moab was across the Dead Sea from Judah
 - i. Moabites were descendents of Moab
 - (1) Lot's grandson by incest with his oldest daughter
 - (2) So, Moabites were distant relatives of Jews
 - ii. Moabites worshipped Chemosh (Kee'-maush), not Jehovah
 - (1) Human sacrifices to Chemosh weren't uncommon
 - (a) 2 Kings 3:27, where Moab king sacrifices eldest son to win a battle!
 - (2) Later (900's BC) Solomon introduced Chemosh worship into Israel to please his foreign wives (1 Kings 11:7 “...built a high place for Chemosh...”)
2. After a while, **Elimelech dies**, leaving Naomi a widow
3. The two **sons** take Moabites **wives**.
 - a. Chilion marries Orpah
 - b. Mahlon marries Ruth
4. After 10 years **both boys die**. Naomi “*bereft of her two children and her husband*” (Ruth 1:5)
5. **Famine ends** in Judah
 - a. Naomi decides to return to Bethlehem **alone**
 - b. Ruth wants to go with Naomi
 - c. <**Read Ruth 1:16-18**> One of most beautiful passages in the Bible.
 - d. Finally, Ruth ceases her objections

Ruth gleans for survival

1. <Read Ruth 2:1-3>
2. Ruth gleans in **Boaz's field**
 - a. Boaz = “In him is strength”
3. Glean = Pick up grain left behind for the poor—provided by the Law <Read Lev 19:9-10>
4. Boaz asks the servants about her (v.5)
 - a. They explain her situation and her **request** to glean
5. Boaz offers Ruth **protection** and **kindness** <Read Ruth 2:8-9, 15-16>
 - a. **More** than was required by the Law
 - b. Our **first glimpse** of Boaz’s **character** (fulfilling the *spirit* of the Law—**Charity**)

Q: Why would she need “protection” in addition to permission?

A: Field servants often **insulted** and even **attacked** gleaners

6. Ruth asks Boaz why he is being so **kind** to her
 - a. His reply: <Read Ruth 2:10-12>
 - b. That **promise** is **still good today!**
 - c. **Second glimpse** of Boaz’s character—putting the **focus on God!**
7. Ruth returns to the city and **reports** to Naomi <Read Ruth 2:18-23>
 - a. Naomi tells Ruth that Boaz is a "**close relative**" (v.20)
 - i. Hebrew word is **GOEL**, which means "**kinsman redeemer**" More on this soon...
 - b. Boaz allows Ruth to glean **exclusively** in his fields during **both** barley and wheat harvests

Boaz learns of Ruth’s desire to be “redeemed”

1. Naomi the **matchmaker** <Read Ruth 3:1-5>
 - a. Naomi tells Ruth to go seek “security” (**marriage**) from Boaz
 - b. Under Law, widow was to marry **husband’s brother** so family name could continue and possessions be retained (ref. Deut 25:5-10)
 - c. Since no living brother, widow was to seek redemption from a “**kinsman redeemer**”
 - d. Redeemer **requirements**
 - i. He had to be a **blood relative**
 - ii. He had to have the **price/power** to purchase the forfeited inheritance
 - iii. He had to be **willing** to redeem
2. After barley was harvested, it had to be **winnowed** (threshed—separate chaff from grain) and **guarded**
3. Ruth follows Naomi's instructions and goes to Boaz as he **slept** while guarding the grain
 - a. <Read Ruth 3:6-9>
 - b. **No impropriety** here! This was how it was done.
 - c. “*Spread your covering over your maid*” refers to Ruth’s request that Boaz pledge his intentions of marrying her
 - d. Notice that Ruth **asked to be redeemed!**
 - e. This was **required** of the woman
4. Boaz replies to Ruth <Read 3:10-13>
 - a. He is **thanking her!**
 - b. He’ll **gladly redeem**, but another, closer relative has first rights!
 - c. **More glimpses** into Boaz’s character!

Boaz makes the arrangements

1. <Read Ruth 4:1-11>
 - a. At the city gate, with witnesses, he and the closer relative decide the matter
 - i. Removing of the sandal signified transfer of redemptive rights

Boaz and Ruth are married, and blessed with a son

1. <Read Ruth 4:13-17>
2. The son is named Obed (“worshipper” or “servant”)
3. He was a **grandfather** of **David** and a descendant of **Jesus**
4. A **partial lineage** is given in Ruth 4:18-22
 - a. For a continuation of this lineage, see Matt 1:2-16

Similarities between Boaz and Jesus

1. To be Redeemer, Jesus had to...
 - a. ...be a **blood relative** < Read Phil 2:5-8>
 - i. Boaz was a relative of Ruth
 - ii. Jesus is related to all of us
 - (1) To the Jews through Boaz
 - (2) To the Gentiles through Ruth
 - b. ...have the **price/power** to purchase the forfeited inheritance <Read John 10:11,18>
 - c. ...be **willing** to redeem <Read Gal 4:4-5>

Characteristics of Boaz

1. A redeemer
2. Caring
3. Kind
4. Protective