

## NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

### LESSON FORTY-SIX: RUTH 3:3a

**"Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee,,,"**

Naomi began to give Ruth instructions on how she was to proceed that night. The goal was to advise Boaz that she was willing for him to act the part of the Kinsman-Redeemer. She was, in fact, willing to be his wife.

The steps Ruth took that night are the same steps the Church (of which Ruth is a type) has taken to attain to her position as the Bride of Christ. First, Ruth was told to wash herself. Ruth, of course, washed her physical body with literal water. The Bride of Christ, however, takes a spiritual bath, which cleanses the heart from the stain of sin.

Titus 3:5 tells us that we (the Church) were saved according to His mercy "by the washing of regeneration." At the moment a person believes on Jesus (accepts Him as Savior, to use the common terminology), the spirit part of him, which was dead, is made alive. This is the meaning of the word "regeneration," that is, "to be made alive." That part of a human being which is capable of relating to God, Who is a Spirit, is now awake and active and able to communicate. The cleansing power of regeneration removes all sin and makes fellowship with God possible.

Next, Naomi tells Ruth to anoint herself. "Anoint" means "to smear over with oil" Rubbing oil on the skin and/or hair would give Ruth glowing skin and shiny hair. Olive oil scented with spices could be used as a perfume, as well. As "anointing" enhanced Ruth's physical appearance, the Church received a spiritual benefit from the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Oil, in Scripture is a type of the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5 states that believers are saved by the washing of regeneration "and renewing of the Holy Ghost." At the moment of salvation the believer is cleansed from all sin, his spirit becomes alive, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in his regenerated spirit, and, thus, the believer becomes a new creature (II Cor. 5:17). The indwelling Holy Spirit becomes the believer's teacher and guide (John 14:26). It is through the agency of the Holy Spirit that the believer understands Scripture (II Cor. 2:10). Thus, the baby Christian grows and matures in the faith by yielding to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Next, Naomi tells Ruth to get dressed. Up to this point Ruth has probably been wearing clothes suitable for a widow in mourning. Naomi tells her that it's time to put off her mourning and get dressed up. If Ruth caught Boaz's eye in her widow's weeds imagine how he will react when he sees her in her finest dress, face and hair aglow, and smelling like a rose.

As a type of the Church, Ruth's instruction to "get dressed up" has an amazing parallel. There's a wonderful doctrine in Scripture called "Justification." To make it easy to remember what this big theological term means you may hear the phrase "just as if I never sinned." It is true that justification means that God looks at the believer as sinless because Jesus has paid the sin debt for him. But, it's more than that. The believer doesn't just have his sins taken away, but in their place he has received the righteousness of Christ (II Cor. 5:21). The believer stands before God clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

As the Bride of Christ, the Church will rejoice with the Bridegroom at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7). The believers that make up the Church will be clothed in garments made from their own

righteous deeds (Rev. 19:7-8). This is part of the rewards that believers can earn by serving the Lord while on earth. Paul urges believers to "put on" a variety of virtues (Col. 3:12-14). Live as if these virtues are a part of you.

We are all making our wedding garments right now. We add a pearl here, a piece of lace there, each time we obey the Word, serve the Lord, and show the world by example what they are missing without Jesus as Savior and Lord. Working through our tragic circumstances and life changing issues can become an opportunity to enhance our wedding garments by responding to our challenges in a godly manner. How is your wedding garment coming?

*"And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." Colossians 3:14*