

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON FIFTY-SEVEN: RUTH 3:18

"Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day."

Naomi recognize the message in the gift Boaz had given Ruth. She had complete confidence that he would transact Ruth's business faithfully. He would ensure her redemption either by the nearer relation or himself. Perhaps Naomi already knew the nearer relation would not be able to marry Ruth, which was why she focused on Boaz. Perhaps not. The Bible doesn't give us that information.

Naomi's advice was simply, "sit down and rest until Boaz has completed his business." Ruth's part was done. It was her duty to advise the Kinsman-Redeemer that she wanted him to act on her behalf. She had completed her task in the darkness of the threshing floor. Ruth had followed the Mosaic Law to the letter. Her work was done.

The six measures of grain that Boaz gave her symbolized the end of her labor. Six, in Scripture, represents service and labor. God worked six days creating heaven, the earth, the sea, and everything in them (Ex. 20:11). He was our example. Man was commanded to work six days, as well (Ex. 20:9). Six is also the number of man. Man was created to work. God put Adam to work immediately with the task of naming the animals (Gen. 2:19) and the ongoing job of keeping the garden (Gen. 2:15).

Six falls short of seven, the number of perfection, the number of completeness. God rested on the seventh day because His work of creation was complete (Gen. 2:2). He commanded man to follow His example and cease from labor on the seventh day (Ex. 20:10). Naomi advised Ruth that her laboring in this matter was over and it was time to rest.

Sitting still and waiting for someone else to act isn't easy. Ruth had complete faith in Boaz. But, it was still hard to do nothing and just wait. It's the not knowing what is going on elsewhere that is so hard. Boaz would be at the city gate doing what while she sat at home? Was he having problems dealing with the nearer relation? Had some complication arisen? How long would it be before she heard something?

Waiting for the Lord to act is hard, too. Scripture tells us many times to be still and wait on God. It's unnatural for humans to sit still and do nothing (perhaps because God had created us to work!). It takes discipline to wait, to sit still, to calm our hearts, and just rest. It isn't part of our daily regimen. But perhaps it should be.

"Be still and know that I am God," (Psalm 46:10), the Scripture says. What would happen if we made it a priority to take a few minutes out of our busy schedules to sit still and think about God's attributes and works? To quietly ponder what He has done for me? To meditate on His Word (Psalm 1:2)?

Boaz, meanwhile, will not get any rest, Naomi says, until he has completed his work. Here, again, he is like Jesus Who would not rest until He had completed His work of redemption (John 5:17). And, when His work was completed, He announced it from the cross, "It is finished!" (John 19:30). In the Greek language He said, "Tetelstari!" When a criminal had completed his sentence and was released, the

Roman judge would write, "tetelstari" across his record. It means, "paid in full." Jesus' death paid our sin debt in full.

Nothing that has happened in our lives, no matter how traumatic or devastating, will ever compare to the work of Jesus in paying our sin debt in full. We have the power to go on because we are at peace with God. The indwelling Holy Spirit will give us the strength we need to meet our challenges and trials. His purpose is to make us more like Christ. It may not be easy or fun. But, then, we are all still a work in progress.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Hebrew 13:20-21