

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON THIRTY-THREE: RUTH 2:8-9

"Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearst thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn."

Having gathered the information about Ruth from the foreman, Boaz was then ready to address Ruth in person. He calls her, "my daughter," emphasizing their age difference.

Scripture does not give us Boaz's age (or Ruth's, for that matter). We know he is older than Ruth by his reference to her as "daughter" (v. 8) and "damsel" (v. 5). A "damsel" was a term used to refer to a female from infancy to adolescence; a young woman. Likewise, the Hebrew word translated "young" (referring to the young men in v. 9) refers to a male from infancy to adolescence. Ruth, then, was likely in her late teens, early twenties. Bible scholars have estimated Boaz to be about Naomi's age.

Boaz advises Ruth to listen, to heed what he had to say. She is instructed to do her gleaning in his fields where she would be safe and treated well. Harvesting the barley and wheat crops ran from March through July. She would be assured of an opportunity to gather food stuffs throughout spring and summer.

Boaz also invited Ruth to follow along with the female reapers to glean and gather what they left. Normally, the reapers would do their work and move on. Only then would the gleaners step up to gather the stalks of grain that were left. Boaz was allowing Ruth to get there first and glean as much as she wanted.

Boaz had already warned his male servants to treat Ruth respectfully. A widow in Ruth's circumstances could expect to be harassed and insulted. Further, she could be in physical danger because she had no father or husband to protect her. Boaz would be her protector as long as she was on his land.

In addition, Boaz allows Ruth to drink the water that was provided for his workers. Later, we will see that she is invited to eat with the workers as well (v. 14).

Prophetically, Ruth, is a type of the church that is currently working in the world (represented by the fields) gathering souls for Christ. The time of harvest is the Church Age (runs from the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was given, to the Rapture). We are all participating in this activity right now. Or, at least we should be.

Before His ascension, Jesus had instructed His followers to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15). Known as the Great Commission (see Mt. 28:19-20), these are our marching orders as soldiers of the cross. There is no "time out" given while we are hurting and sad. Rather, witnessing to others about what God has done for us is a great healer. It turns our thoughts to Him and reminds us of the blessings He has given. It's a change of focus that benefits us and others. Ruth worked hard all day, focusing on the goal of providing for her aged mother-in-law. The Church is instructed to work while it is still light (that is, while there is still time). We want all our loved ones to be

together with us when Jesus returns in the clouds and gathers His Own and signals the end of the Church Age (I Thess. 4:13-18).

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."
Ephesians 5:15-18