

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON FORTY-SEVEN: RUTH 3:3-4

"Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do."

Naomi gave Ruth specific instruction on how to go about exercising her rights under the Mosaic Law, which provided for a childless widow to marry and have a family (Dt. 25:5-6). Of course, she added some motherly advice as well. "Bathe, put on your best dress, brush your hair, and add oils and perfume, my daughter."

Once Ruth was all dressed up, she had someplace to go. And that someplace was the threshing floor where Boaz and his workers would be winnowing the grain. Naomi cautioned Ruth not to reveal herself to Boaz yet. Whole families joined in the celebration of the end of the harvest. Ruth's mission was not to be on public display. This was a private matter between herself and Boaz.

Thus, Ruth was instructed to just watch from the shadows and observe where Boaz laid down. It was the custom for the men to sleep near the grain to protect it from thieves. Since the threshing floor was circular, the grain would be piled up in the middle of the floor and the men would sleep with their heads toward the grain and their feet sticking out like the spokes of a wheel.

Naomi told Ruth to wait until Boaz was settled on the threshing floor. When he had fallen asleep, she was to uncover his feet and lay down with her feet by his feet. And, she would cover her feet with the corner of his cloak.

Although these instructions seem strange to us, there was nothing immoral or improper in what Ruth was told to do. The threshing floor was a public place where families attended the festivities. Ruth had a good reputation in Bethlehem and Naomi would never put that in jeopardy.

The goal was to make Boaz aware that Ruth wanted him to be her Kinsman-Redeemer. Boaz had certainly given her enough hints that he was willing to do so. Jesus, our own Kinsman-Redeemer, was likewise willing to save. But, each person has to come to Him and let Him know that he/she wants Him to be his/her Redeemer.

Ruth had laid down at the feet of her chosen Redeemer. Likewise, we cannot find ourselves in a better place than at Jesus' feet. Mary of Bethany found knowledge at the feet of Jesus, where she sat quietly listening to His words (Luke 10:38-42). The sinful woman found forgiveness at the feet of Jesus, where she ministered to him by washing His feet with her tears and wiping them with her hair (Luke 7:36-50). Whatever your need you can find it at the feet of Jesus. He provides comfort, wisdom, guidance, healing, and acceptance of yourself and your circumstances. Or, you can just sit at the feet of your Kinsman-Redeemer and rest.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30