

A Floor

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[0:00] Let's take our Bibles tonight and open them to Ruth and find the third chapter.

! That's where we're going to be tonight. And a wonderful book, the book of Ruth. I think it's a jewel of a book in the Old Testament.

And I think we could also say, without any doubt, that the book of Ruth is a beautiful love story. It really is.

I mean, first you have, of course, Ruth's love for Naomi that is so self-sacrificing and gracious. Then you have, I think, also, though maybe for some it's a little more difficult to see, but I think it's pretty clear that we have in this book Naomi's love for Ruth.

And we're going to, I think, consider some of that tonight in chapter 3. And then, of course, certainly we have Boaz's love for Ruth. Okay? I mean, that is a beautiful, the beautiful theme, the primary, I guess you would say, theme of the book.

[1:20] Boaz's love for Ruth and Ruth for Boaz. But really beyond just, you know, the book itself and the literature, the text of it, beyond that, we have, of course, God's love for His people.

That's what we ought to get above all other lessons from the book. God's love, God's grace, gracious love, His redeeming love for His people, Jew and Gentile alike.

In fact, I would suggest to you that I think we see here a glimpse of the church in the Old Testament. The book of Ruth, then, is a love story.

And yet, I would remind you that the word love appears nowhere in the book. Not anywhere there. You don't have the word love. And yet, it's clear there. The book of Ruth is also a story of redemption.

It certainly is that. Redemption through the work, the gracious work of the kinsman redeemer. And it's a book of redemption in the legal sense, according to the Mosaic law, the Levitical law of the kinsman redeemer.

[2:40] So, the goal, as I've already introduced, and very tempted every time I've preached, as a matter of fact, since we started the book of Ruth, I've been tempted to just launch out totally into this whole beautiful picture of the goal, the redeemer, the kinsman redeemer.

I'm not talking about Boaz for Ruth. I'm talking about our redeemer. And really tempted to launch out into that here in the third chapter. But I want to resist that.

Even though we've been singing all about our redeemer, I want to resist that until we get through with chapter 4. And then we'll put it all together and see Boaz as the perfect, perfect type of our redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, it's a book of redemption in the legal sense, the Jewish Mosaic law sense. It's also a book of redemption in the theological sense, according to God's plan of redemption that we see here.

I've divided the book into four chapters, or the book's four chapters. I didn't do that. Somebody else did that. But I've taken those four chapters to develop four sermons and have kind of named them or addressed them according to where the story is taking place in each of the four chapters.

[4:09] First, we have a famine. So, it's taking place in the midst of a famine, chapter 1. Chapter 2, the field. And that's what we saw last time. And then tonight, the third chapter, the floor.

The floor, the threshing floor, because that's where primarily the story takes place. It's the threshing floor of Boaz, which probably was just a very simple thing.

We're not talking about a barn necessarily. Probably right out there in the field, out in the open. But it was the threshing floor, special place prepared for that type of work to be done.

And that's where we're going to be focusing tonight. And then when we get to chapter 4, the family. Because it's going to be family getting together. Boaz and the nearer kin, who remains unnamed.

We don't know him. And what transpires there, transpires there rather, in the story as this transaction is made. All right.

[5:09] So, that's where we're going, where we're going tonight. And where we've been going for the last several weeks. And where we're going to be going next week. So, let's look at chapter 3. Let me read it.

It is perhaps the most beautiful part of the book. We could just kind of read it and imagine ourselves being there.

And kind of seeing it. This is where really the love story aspect of the book really shines. All right. It's chapter 3. Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, to Ruth, My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you?

Now, Boaz, whose young woman or women you were with, his maidens you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.

Therefore, wash yourself and anoint yourself. Put on your best garment. Go down to the threshing floor. But do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.

[6:20] Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies. And you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down.

And he will tell you what you should do. And she said to her, All that you say to me, I will do. So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her.

And after Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. And she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled and turned himself, and there a woman was lying at his feet. And he said, Who are you? So she answered, I am Ruth, your maidservant.

Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative. Then he said, Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter, for you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich.

[7:27] And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman. Now it is true that I am a close relative.

However, there is a relative closer than I. Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you, good.

Let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you as the Lord lives. Lie down until morning. And so she laid at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another.

Then he said, Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor. Also, he said, Bring the shawl that is on you and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six ephahs of barley and laid it on her.

Then she went into the city. When she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Is that you, my daughter? Then she told her all that the man had done for her.

[8:33] And she said, These six ephahs of barley he gave me, for he said to me, Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law. Then she said, Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out.

For the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day. All right? Interesting story.

Beautiful story. Now, chapter 3, then, opens with this dialogue between Naomi and Ruth.

All right? Even before we get to the threshing floor, we have Naomi having a concern for Ruth. All right? That's what we have in the first several verses of the chapter.

She's concerned. She loves Ruth. I think that is clear. I think she's loved her all along. And so now she's concerned about her.

And so what we want to do, what I want to do, is just kind of walk through this chapter kind of inductively, but also deductively. We're going to make some deductions about what the text is telling us.

[9:38] But we're just going to kind of walk through it. And the first thing I want you to notice in these first four or five verses is Naomi's concern for Ruth's security. Now, this is very genuine.

Naomi is, you know, not an uncaring mother-in-law. It may seem that way, may have seemed that way back there in chapter 1 when she tried to urge Ruth and Orpah to go back, find you a husband here in Moab, don't come with me.

It may have seemed a little bit callous, maybe indifferent, maybe uncaring. But I don't think even then it was that. I think even then Naomi, as we're going to see, was concerned for Ruth's well-being.

And so we have her concern for Ruth's security. Look at verse 1 again. Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, and I pay close attention to what she said. She said, My daughter, that in itself was an address of endearment, of love for her.

For my daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? Implying, of course, that, you know, that it would be better for you than it is for me.

[11:01] I mean, here's Naomi. She's a widow. And she's too old, perhaps, to remarry and have more children. It's all over for her. And her situation apparently is not all that great.

I think we can assume that she was, to some extent, impoverished. And so she's concerned for Ruth that her well-being would be something better than it is for Naomi.

Now, this was Naomi's concern for Ruth. She was concerned for her, quote, and this is how it's translated in the New King James, her security.

Now, the actual word there would be better translated rest. Though it may not, that word may not seem as clear to us, may not seem as understandable to us as the word security, but it is the word rest.

Rest. A kind of rest that can only come from another. This is what Naomi's implying. I should be concerned and am concerned for a type of security for you, a rest that I can't provide for you, that you cannot provide for yourself.

[12:24] This is where we're kind of being introduced to the need for a Redeemer, you see. And so she's concerned that she would have a rest, a kind of rest that must be provided by another.

As a matter of fact, it is the same word that Ruth uses, or Naomi rather, uses way back there in chapter 1 and verse 9. She expressed this very same thing not only to Ruth, but also to Orpah. Remember, they had come out, they were leaving Moab, the famine was over in Israel, and she is now returning to Bethlehem. Her husband's dead, her two sons are dead, and she has the two widows, her daughter-in-laws, and their widows too, of course.

And so initially they're coming with Naomi. They're going to return to Bethlehem, and Naomi urges them to stay there because she's concerned for their rest. In fact, that's what she says in chapter 1, verse 9, The very same word that's translated later, at least in this version, translates security. Same word, rest. That you might find rest each in the house of her husband. Husband what? Their husbands are dead.

[13:45] Well, husbands in the sense of being remarried again in Moab. Well, finding Moabite husbands there among your own people. She was concerned for their rest, their security in that sense.

But here it takes on a little bit different connotation here in chapter 3. This rest or security, in fact, some of you might even have an NIV, and it translates it a home, which really is not it.

Well, it is that, but it's much more than that. That's why we should prefer the word rest, because it involves much more than just simply the provision of physical needs.

Naomi's concerned for that, certainly. That is a home, shelter, safety, clothes, food, all the basic necessities.

Naomi certainly wants Ruth to have those things, and the implication being that maybe not all those things are provided as well as she would like. But it's more than that when she's talking about this rest.

[14:56] Naomi, of course, is really talking about Ruth's need for a husband. That's what she's talking about here. And not just a husband to care for her, but a husband, more importantly, a husband that would give her sons.

That's what she is concerned for Ruth about. That she would find a husband so that that husband could, or so that she could provide sons.

And listen, that was every Israelite woman's desire and greatest blessing. That was, to use the word Naomi used, that was every Israelite woman's rest.

You see, here's the idea. God's covenant with His people, His people Israel, given back in Genesis 12, 1-3, was what? The blessing of many descendants. Many descendants.

That was the covenant. To be blessed with many descendants. And the Israelite woman was, of course, an integral part in fulfilling that blessing. I mean, listen.

[16:05] No woman, no sons. No sons, no descendants. See how crucial the woman's part was in that. And she took that part very, very seriously.

Now, you know, no woman, no sons, no sons, no descendants. No descendants was the situation that Naomi now found herself in. And Ruth also.

Which was not a good place to be. It was not a place of blessing. It was not a place of rest. And so, way beyond just Naomi's concern that Ruth would be cared for, have a home, and so forth, and all those basic needs.

She wanted her to have, find a husband among the Israelites. So that sons could be produced. So that descendants would be produced. So that the line would continue.

That would be the greatest of blessings for any Israelite woman. This is what Naomi wanted for Ruth. So, this was Naomi's desire for Ruth, the Moabitess.

[17:10] And yet, it would also be a tremendous blessing for Naomi. Right? A tremendous blessing for her.

I mean, she no longer could be directly involved in this part of God's covenant blessings for His people. Naomi could not be. Her husband is dead.

Her sons are dead. Effectively, unless something were to happen, that line is cut off. Cut off with her. It's all over. So Naomi could not be a part of that.

But Naomi could find this rest for herself, this blessing for herself, through Ruth. Through Ruth, her daughter-in-law.

If she could find a husband. And so forth. So starting with verse 2, we have Naomi, and she has hatched a plan. And it's maybe from our perspective, as we read it, it may sound quite strange.

[18:16] But this was her plan, her strategy to bring blessing to Ruth. And here it is. Verse 2. Now, Boaz, Ruth is saying, or Naomi is saying, now Boaz, whose young women you were with, alright, you know who he is.

Is he not our relative? Yes, he is. That's already been established. In fact, she says to Ruth, because Naomi's been keeping up with these things.

She's been working on this, and planning this, and she says, you know, in fact, Boaz, you know, our relative, he just happens to be winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.

I just, I happen to know that. And so, therefore, Ruth, wash yourself, get yourself cleaned up, anoint yourself, what does that mean?

Ladies, put on some perfume. Put on your best garments, and go down to the threshing floor.

[19:23] Now, so far, all that makes sense to us. The rest of it, what? She says, do not make yourself known to the man.

Now, maybe even that part makes sense, you know, kind of play, hard to get for a moment, kind of coy. Don't make yourself known until he has finished eating and drinking. Then, it shall be that when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies, and you shall go in, uncover his feet, lie down, and he will tell you what you should do.

Now, what are we to make of that? Well, some people have made quite a lot about that. A number of erroneous things about that, I would think.

But what, I mean, it seems strange, doesn't it? Now, perhaps if you've studied the book of Ruth, maybe you already know what's going on here, but, but even if you have, you might have forgotten. Still, it sounds strange, doesn't it? I mean, what's this? This is your plan, Naomi, to do this? And, not only does it seem strange, but it also seems very inappropriate, quite frankly.

[20:41] Possibly even immoral. In fact, some theologians have actually argued that. A lot of these things are just kind of code words, for, you know, kind of sexual rendezvous.

You know, that she's going to throw herself at him, and there's going to be some kind of immoral thing going on here. Some have actually tried to make that case. And so, I say again, what are we to make of this?

Well, though we do not have, by the way, any other written authority to base this on, because it just doesn't exist, inside or outside of the Bible, it seems clear, from the detailed way that Naomi instructs Ruth, it's very detailed, very methodical.

I mean, it's so strange, you know, to us, that we must assume that it's some kind of custom. All right, even though, by the way, we don't have any authority for that.

You know, not in the Bible, no instructions like this, not any extra biblical documents or writings, you know, about this.

[21:55] I mean, there are some writings, you know, those who have speculated about what this means, but I mean, any authoritative writing, besides Scripture. And yet, it just seems clear, that this is some kind of custom.

And, even, the detailed things, very specific things, that Boaz, does, in reaction to this. I mean, I mean, he just knows, right away, just exactly what to do.

And then, we have more things, that seem strange to us, as we get into chapter 4. When Boaz, meets with the nearer kin, and, you know, the shoe business, and all this other stuff, that we'll get into next time.

I mean, you just have to look at that as a whole, and say, well, this is just some, even though there's no authority for it, nothing written about it, this just seems customary. Boaz knew exactly what this meant, and he knew exactly what to do about it, and Naomi knew exactly, how to instruct her daughter-in-law, and so forth.

So, this is some kind of custom. And then, when we get later in the text, and we'll look at this again, in the next section of the sermon, but, you know, Ruth, does exactly what Naomi said, and she removes the blanket, I mean, that's literally what's going on here.

[23:19] Remove the blanket, in order to uncover Boaz's feet, and the language even suggests, that maybe even his legs are uncovered. In fact, there is, you know, room to conclude, that she just took the blanket off of him.

That's why some have concluded, that this was some kind of, immoral thing that's going to happen here. The guy's been working out in the field, and he eats, and he drinks, and he's contented, and he goes to sleep.

So he's got his clothes on, folks. All right? The Bible doesn't say, that she went in and took his robe off, or his trousers off, or anything like that. Excuse me. But just uncovered his feet, his legs.

And then, you know, you have to consider, in verse 9, what she asked Boaz. She asked Boaz, take your maidservant, under your wing.

Now that's how it's translated, in the New King James. I'll translate it that way, in any other version. And I don't, even though it can be translated that way, it's not a mistranslation.

[24:29] But, but it could, also be translated, your covering. And so, you see the symbolism.

She has uncovered him, of his covering, and then she asked, that he would take his covering, and cover her. That he would be her redeemer.

That's what she, is asking. It's all, kind of customary. So, you know, and that's what Boaz, sought to do. To be her covering. To be her, her kinsman, redeemer.

Her, ga'al. Her redeemer. Alright, so, we have Naomi's concern, for Ruth's security. Second, we have Ruth's, compliance, to Naomi's strategy.

Alright, we've already, talked a little bit, about the strategy. It's already been introduced. Now we have Ruth, obeying that, and following through with that, and, and following Naomi's, instructions, to the T.

[25:35] In fact, she says some other things. I, I think we're to assume, or some other things are said here, to assume that, what we have, here in the first few verses, are not everything, that Naomi said to Ruth.

She gave instructions, and then, Ruth, we find that some other things, are said. Ruth, that is, understood, what she was supposed to do. Alright, look at verse 5. And she said to her, all that you say to me, I will do.

So she went down, to the threshing floor, did according to all, that her mother-in-law, instructed her. And after Boaz, had eaten, and drunk, and his heart was cheerful, you can make of that, whatever you want.

Alright? Personally, I just think, he was happy, relaxed, had a good meal, ready to sleep.

I don't think it means, he got drunk. Alright? You can, believe what you want. And he went to lie down, at the end of the heap, of grain. Now this is on the, threshing floor.

[26:38] Again, the threshing floor, very likely, was just a place, out in the field, that had been, pressed down, really hard, and they would bring in, you know, the, the, the grain, you know, on the, still in its, rough form, and there it would be, it would be, the, the grain would actually, be separated, from all the chaff, and so forth.

Alright? So, it's a threshing floor. So, a bunch of it, had already been heaped up. They, maybe, were already working on a lot of it, still a lot to be done, and he, finds a place at, on the other side of

it, kind of a secluded place, where he could be all alone, we're to assume, that the other workers, are sleeping somewhere, out there in the field, because their work is not done.

And so, there he is, he's asleep, went to lie down, at the end of the heap of the grain, and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

Now, I want to stop right there, and have you consider, that this was risky business for her. I know this is part of the plan, she's obeying, Naomi's plan, apparently some customary things, are at play here, and yet, this is risky.

Do you think, there was any guarantee, that this would work? I think, there was a guarantee, in the heart and mind of God, is providence of God, but, you know, we're not always privy, to God's providence, and his hand, but, this was risky, no guarantee.

[28:15] She was not an Israelite, all right, we've said that before, and the writer of Ruth, reminds us, over and over, she was the Moabitess, she was a Gentile, and she was a woman, and she was a widow, and she, is I think, to what degree, we don't really know, but she is, impoverished, she's poor, maybe even very close, to destitute, I think, they're pretty serious, condition here, where the only way, they're going to survive, is for Ruth, to go out, and glean in the fields, that was something, the impoverished did, was there any guarantee, that Boaz, wouldn't just simply, throw Ruth out on her ear, no guarantee, this was risky business, for Ruth, and yet, I think Ruth knew that, and yet she obeyed, she obeyed, see, she has trusted,

Naomi's God, Yahweh God, it was, remember, Boaz said, under his wing, she sought refuge, she has, completely surrendered, herself, to, the Lord, Yahweh God, to Naomi's God, and so she is also, trusting Naomi, she's just going to, trust him, trust her God, and she says, all that you say, to me, I will do, this is a testimony, really, of Ruth's, genuine faith, in the one true God, she didn't know, what would happen, no guarantee, that things would work out right, he might even kick her out, not let her, glean in his fields, any longer, then they would really, be in trouble, she's just trusting God, see, one theologian wrote, and I quote, here is a servant, demanding, that the boss, marry her, a Moabite, making the demand, of an Israelite, a woman, making a demand, of a man, a poor person, making the demand, of a rich man, was this an act, of foreigner naivism, or a daughter-in-law's, devotion to her mother-in-law, or another sign, of the hidden hand of God, I don't know, from a natural perspective, the scheme, was doomed, from the beginning, as a hopeless gamble, and the responsibility, Naomi placed on Ruth, was unreasonable, but, it worked, it worked, so we have, Naomi's concern, for Ruth's security, Ruth's compliance, to Naomi's strategy, because she's, trusting Naomi, and trust, more importantly, trusting, her God, Yahweh God, and third, and finally, Boaz, consent, to Ruth's, solicitation, supplication, we might even say, supplication, her praying to Boaz, so to speak, to do something, very, very, very important, significant for her, and for Naomi, verse 8, now it happened, at midnight, that the man, was startled, and turned himself, and there, a woman, was lying at his feet, surprise, surprise, and he said, who are you, very natural, it's all very natural, so she answered,

I am Ruth, your maidservant, take your maidservant, under your wing, for you are, a close relative, see the, humility of Ruth, I mean, we could really, do a study of Ruth, throughout this book, and see so many things, so many characteristics, about Ruth, that, that are, examples to us, as God's people, she's very humble, I'm your maidservant, and I have a right, to ask anything of you, I'm a slave, in a sense, utterly dependent, upon your graciousness, and mercy, but then she says, take your maidservant, under your wing, she asks, a very big thing, for you are, a close relative, now understand, that this is, more than just a request, to take care, of her needs, much more than that, I mean, there is property, to be redeemed, yes, and that's part of it, but, people,

Ruth, is asking, for more than that, what is she asking, that Boaz, would marry her, that's what he's asking, what she's asking, that Boaz, would marry her, the widow, of a kinsman, which was, provided for, in Deuteronomy 25, the kinsman redeemer, some of the instructions, for that, the various, responsibilities, of the kinsman redeemer, and by the way, none of these, in a sense, I mean, it is part of the Mosaic law, but none of these, are required, of the kinsman redeemer, Boaz, had the choice, we're going to see this, next week, when we compare, Boaz with Christ, the kinsman redeemer, must be willing, no one, will force him, the law, does not force him, and the law, does not force, the kinsman redeemer, to also, marry, Ruth, the Moabitess, the widow, of a kinsman, but she's asking him, to do that, and she didn't come, right out and say that, she doesn't say, will you marry me, you know, but now,

[34 : 30] Boaz understood that, he understands the law, the provision of the law, Boaz understood, the provision of the law, of the Gaal, the kinsman redeemer, Boaz understood, that he was being asked, by Ruth, to fulfill, not just some of the obligations, the provisions of the Gaal, but all of them, to the fullest extent, including the marrying, of the kinsman's widow, his kinsman's widow, and by the way, and we'll get into this, when we get into the doctrine, of the kinsman redeemer, next week, but when Ruth said, take your maidservant, under your wing, that, that, that has an allusion, to the redeemer, our great redeemer, because some of the same language, is used, a number of places, but I'll give you one example, Ezekiel 16, 8, which is a reference, to our redeemer, and listen to this, when I passed, by you again, and looked upon you, indeed, your time, was the time of love, so I spread, my wing, over you, and covered, your nakedness, yes,

I swore, an oath to you, and entered, into a covenant, with you, and you became, mine, says the Lord God, now, how did Boaz, respond then, well, verse 10, then he said, blessed are you, of the Lord, my daughter, for you have shown, more kindness, at the end, than at the beginning, we'll talk about that, here in a minute, in that you did not, go after young men, whether poor or rich, and now my daughter, do not fear, rest assured, I will do for you, all that you request, I'll do it, said, for all the people, of my town, know that you are, a virtuous woman, let me ask you something, just by reading that, and acknowledging, Boaz, very quick response, do you think,

Boaz, had been thinking, about this, already, now, I don't think, he was expecting, her to show up, that night, at his feet, the Boaz, had already been, working all this out, you see, maybe even, before Naomi, had hatched, her plan, though I doubt it, I think, Naomi, was one up, on Boaz, she had all this, worked out, I mean, a woman just knows, what a woman knows, huh, can I get a witness, right here, and so, you know, huh, did I have one, oh, my wife, yeah, oh, the things she knows, so, he had already, given her, given this, a lot of thought, and been working this out, and Boaz said, two important things, about Ruth, that again, give tremendous testimony, to the character, of Ruth, the Moabitess, he praised her, first of all, he praised her, for two, gracious acts, he said, you have shown, more kindness, by the way, that is the Hebrew word, has said, it's the word for grace, and, though not always, used in this context, the context, of covenant grace, it's not used, in that context, necessarily here, but it is, a very strong word, for grace, self-sacrifice, unmerited, grace, you have shown, more grace, at the end, than at the beginning, and what does he mean, by that, well, we can certainly, understand that he, or know that he's saying, you're showing grace now, here at the end, even more now, than you did at the beginning, well, what about this beginning, he's identifying, two, very gracious, acts, of Ruth, and, really, both, acts, of grace, are, in behalf, of the same person, and it's not Boaz, certainly not Ruth, she's not being gracious, to herself, the first act, of grace, was toward Naomi, and, by the way,

Boaz knew all about it, in fact, it was widely known, and you have to go back, to chapter 2, verse 11, to see it, this act of grace, and Boaz, is speaking here, he said to Ruth, it has been fully reported, to me, all that you have done, for your mother-in-law, since the death, of your husband, and how you have left, your father, and your mother, and the land, of your birth, and have come, to a people, whom you did not know before, that was her act of grace, toward Naomi, see, she sacrificed herself, she loved Naomi, she, she showed grace to her, all right, it's an act of grace, nobody forced her, that's the nature of grace, grace is not forced, nobody paid her for it, there was nothing in it for her, I mean, her leaving Moab, her family, her support, and going to a foreign country, and a foreign town, to people she did not know, a culture she had no idea about, that, that, nobody paid her to do that, there was nothing in it for her, she just simply acted, out of grace, toward Naomi, then, her kindness, at the end, her second act of grace, verse 10,

Boaz tells us, what it is, that you did not, go after young men, whether poor, or rich, this too, was for Naomi, you say, well it sounds like, it's more for Boaz, you know, I don't think, Boaz was some, decrepit old senior, citizen on his last leg, you know, he's still vital, he's out there, working in the fields, you know, but he wasn't a young man, and so you might, conclude that he's saying, you're showing grace to me, and, you know, loving me, when you could have had, the pick of all these young men, out here, even, whether they're rich or poor, young men, good looking men, more your age, you know, and so forth, and, that's not what he's saying, this was an act of grace, toward Naomi, because, Ruth could have, been selfish in this, and just, looked out for herself, she could have married, someone else, she was a woman, of good reputation,

[42 : 02] I think it's implied, a number of places, in the book, that she was, a beautiful young lady, Boaz is going to say, she's a virtuous young woman, woman of excellence, she could have picked,

a number of young men, whether they were, you know, wealthy or not, was insignificant, but she did not, she chose Boaz, you say, well how is that, for Naomi's sake, because he's a kinsman, the near kinsman, and that was as much, for Naomi, as it was for her, in fact it was more, for Naomi, than for Ruth, did it matter to Ruth, that the line of Elimelech, continued, that didn't matter to her, not like it mattered, for Naomi, she's doing this, for Naomi, you see, so that, the line of her, dead husband, would continue, so that she would receive, the property, of her family, of her dead husband, and the inheritance, and, and she would be, restored, to full status, that's why Ruth, did this,

Boaz knew it, he knew it, and his common knowledge, he's saying, that, your last act, of grace, was even greater, than the first, and then he also, praised her, for her virtuous character, verse 11, for all the people, of my town, know that you, are a virtuous woman, the NASB, translates it, a woman, of excellence, I think the ESV, says a woman, of worth, worthy, she was something, very special, and, and that's something, to be said, really, about a Moabite, for an Israelite, and not just Boaz, but it was the talk, of the town, this Gentile, this Moabite, you know, a group of people, that Israel, Israelites, look at, with disdain, so this is quite, something to be said, she's very unique, she is a woman, of excellence, virtue, virtue, alright, so far, so good, it looks like, Naomi's strategy, was going to pay off, everything, seems to be, smooth sailing, in fact, even better, I think, than she imagined, Boaz, is not only willing, Boaz, actually loves Ruth, and not only, were Ruth's, hopes, coming alive, for her, and Naomi's, hopes coming alive, but also, I think the hopes, of Boaz, were coming alive, and I say, that probably, was better, than she imagined, I think Naomi, knew this, was the case, that she could see, the love, that was there, but there's just one hitch, Boaz, is not the only kinsman, in fact, he is, second in line, there was a nearer kin, verse 12, now, it is true, Boaz said, that I am, a close relative, a, go all, a relative, near kinsman, however, there is a relative, closer than I, and you see, by law, by the Levirate law, the, near, kin, had first dibs, but now,

Boaz, has been thinking, about that too, apparently, because, you know, he's not, later, coming up, with a plan, you know, he's not there, at the threshing floor, and Ruth has come, and, and she, has made her request, be, a covering for me, be my redeemer, and then, Boaz is not, going off, and saying, you know, boy, we've got trouble here, I don't know what to do, there's a nearer kin, no, he's got a plan already, because he knew about this, I don't know if Naomi knew about it, I don't know if she knew about the nearer kin, if she did, she might have been working on that angle, I don't know, but, but, she, you know, Boaz does know, and he's already got a plan, all right, and, so, we're going to find out what that is in chapter 4, but let's just, see what Boaz is going to do, verse 13, stay this night, he says to Ruth, just go, go ahead and stay right here, and in the morning, it shall be that, if he, this nearer kin, will perform the duty of the, go out, the near kinsman for you, then good, he says, let him do it, and I think Boaz is willing to risk it all, but, but, we shall see, he has a plan, but if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the Lord lives, that's pretty, pretty definite statement,

I think again, you know, you don't have to have the word love, in the text, to know that that's what is going on here, he says, I will do it, as the Lord lives, so, lie down until morning, so she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another, it is still dark, and then he said, do not let it be known, that the woman came to the threshing floor, alright, though there was nothing done, immoral, at all, what's Boaz interested in?

[47 : 55] He's interested in, in Ruth's, integrity, her reputation, and also he said, bring the shawl, that is on you, and hold it, and when she held it, he measured, six, ephahs, although ephah is not in the text, six of barley, the meaning is, this is a lot of barley, in fact, there's no real measurement, even though the translators, I'm not sure if they did in all the versions, but they added ephahs in there, when it's not really in the text, it's just six of barley, six of whatever, I don't know what it is, but it's a lot, and he laid it on her, then she went into the city, and now, what was all this for?

It was to assure Naomi, this is for Naomi, to assure Naomi, that Boaz is sincere, he's sincere, here's the proof of it, he's a man of his word, and here's the proof, I've given you all this barley, and when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, is that you, my daughter?

I guess we're to believe, that Naomi, in her senility, she doesn't know, what Ruth looks like anymore, well, you could say it was just dark, but who else is going to be coming in? Of course, it's Ruth, is this, is she just not, her eyesight failing or something?

It may seem that way, but actually, this is a Hebrew idiom, that's not for idiots, it's, it's kind of a, we could use the word, colloquialism, or, it's, it's kind of an expression, that means something, all right,

but it, means something only to the culture, so it's not an idiom we would use, I mean, that's why it was difficult to translate, and the translators have come up with various things, and, and one of them is just simply a question, is that you, my daughter?

But it's an idiom, and it means, basically, what is your status? How did it go?

[50:06] If we, we could, we could even have her saying that, how did it go? Literally, she, she would be saying, we could state it this way, are you still my daughter, or are you, the betrothed of Boaz?

Tell me, tell me, tell me, how did it go? You know, come, sit right here on the bed with me, and let's talk about it, tell me what happened. She can't wait. and so Ruth tells her, she told her all that the man had done for her.

And she said, these six ephs of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, do not go empty handed to your mother-in-law, meaning I care about her too. This, again, is a reassurance to Naomi, that not only is he willing to marry Ruth, he's also willing to buy Naomi's property back, so that it stays in the family, and also it's an indication that he's going to take care of Naomi too.

Not marry her, but take care of her. Going to let the mother-in-law move in with him. And then she said to Ruth, and this completes the chapter, sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out, for the man will not rest, until he has concluded the matter this day.

Now it's interesting that, the chapter begins and ends, with this idea of rest. Naomi's concerned for Ruth's rest, and now Boaz will not rest, until the matter is completed, until Ruth is redeemed.

[51:58] Alright, so you have Naomi, at the beginning of the chapter, she's interested, concerned, for Ruth's rest, her security, and we understand, not just provision, but her rest, by the act of a redeemer.

That's what she's concerned about. And now at the end of the chapter, we have Boaz, he's that redeemer, and he will not rest, until Ruth is secured.

Ruth has rest. And Naomi says to Ruth, sit still, my daughter. sit still. Because there's nothing for you to do.

Nothing but wait, and trust, in your redeemer. And that's the same with us.

when it comes to our redemption, the work of our redeemer, it is His grace.

[53:05] And we just trust Him. We trust Him. Thank you.