

I. Introduction.

II. Naomi's dangerous scheme – planning redemption. v. 1-5

- A. Naomi is determined to find a husband for Ruth. v. 1 1:9 4:13
- B. She identifies Boaz as the best prospect. v. 2
 - 1. She hopes Boaz will perform the duty of a kinsman-redeemer (*goel*) by marrying Ruth. 1:12-13 Dt. 25:5-10
 - 2. Why didn't Boaz initiate marriage to Ruth? 3:12
- C. Naomi instructs Ruth to go to Boaz when he is sleeping on the threshing floor. v. 3-4
 - 1. She picks just the right time – threshing season. Prov. 25:11
 - 2. Ruth is to look and smell her best and then go to him when he is asleep.
 - 3. The words Naomi uses are full of sexual innuendo. Eze. 16:8-12 Hos. 9:1-2 Gen. 39:7 Prov. 7:9
 - 4. This plan brings to mind sordid events from the past. Gen. 19:30ff 38:13ff
 - 5. Exactly what does Naomi expect to happen on the threshing floor?
 - 6. Naomi's plan is extremely risky – a lot could go wrong.
 - 7. Naomi appears to be seeking a good outcome, but in a faithless way. Prov. 3:5-6
- D. Ruth agrees to carry out Naomi's risky plan. v. 5 Luke 1:38

III. Ruth's midnight encounter with Boaz – pursuing redemption. v. 6-15

- A. Ruth carries out Naomi's scheme. v. 6-9
 - 1. Boaz's heart is merry. v. 7a Pr. 15:13 17:22 Ecc. 11:9 3:4 Mt. 11:19
 - 2. Ruth sneaks in and lies at the feet of Boaz. 1 Sam. 24:5
 - 3. Boaz awakes with a shiver.
 - 4. Ruth asks Boaz to spread his wings of redemption over her. v. 9 2:12 Ezek. 16:8
- B. Boaz responds favorably. v. 10-11
 - 1. Boaz acts as a perfect gentleman in a situation in which Ruth is very vulnerable.
 - 2. Boaz blesses Ruth for the lovingkindness she shows – putting the LORD and family responsibility first. v. 10 2:11
 - 3. Boaz praises Ruth's strong character. v. 11b Prov. 31:10ff
 - 4. Boaz promises to do what Ruth asks. v. 11a 2:12
- C. But there is a catch. v. 12-13
 - 1. There is a nearer relative whose claim to Ruth precedes that of Boaz. v. 12
 - 2. Boaz respects this man's rights and won't trample on them to get what he wants.
 - 3. In contrast to Naomi, Boaz is determined to see that God's will is done in God's way and he is willing to wait for God's timing. Prov. 3:5-6 16:1,9
 - 4. Either way Boaz will ensure that Ruth's needs are met. v. 13
- D. Boaz sends Ruth home full. v. 14-15 1:21
 - 1. He protects her reputation and safety. v. 14 2:9
 - 2. What is the meaning of the six measures of barley? v. 15, 17 1:21
- E. Did they or didn't they? 2:1 3:11 Heb. 13:4 1 Cor. 10:13

IV. Ruth returns to Naomi – awaiting redemption. v. 16-18

A. Again Naomi waits anxiously for Ruth. v. 16 2:19

B. Naomi is sure that Boaz will promptly keep his word. v. 17-18 Pr. 3:27-28

By this time tomorrow, Ruth will be a bride. But who will be the groom?

V. Concluding applications.

A. How does the courtship of Ruth and Boaz compare to idealized romance today?

B. What relevant biblical truths about romance are illustrated in this passage?

**1. Our romantic interests must be subordinated to our love for God. 2 Cor. 6:14ff
1 Cor. 7:39 9:5 1 Thess. 4:3-5 2 Tim. 2:22 Mt. 22:37**

2. Our approach to love and marriage must look to the interests of others ahead of our own. Phil. 2:3-4 Mt. 22:39

**3. A good marriage is a great blessing from God. Gen. 2:18,23 Pr. 18:22 19:14 12:4
Eccles. 9:9**

4. Believers are often influenced by the culture in romantic matters. 3:3-4 Ro. 12:2

**5. Choose your spouse based upon what matters most – godly character.
2:1 3:10-11 Prov. 31:10ff**

6. How can a single person gain an excellent reputation? 3:11

**7. Ideally, parents should play an important role in their child's choice of a spouse.
3:1 Gen. 24:3-4 Prov. 11:14 12:15 9:8 13:1**

**8. Respect the rights of others as you explore your romantic options. 3:12-13
Someone else may wind up marrying the girl/boy you are courting.**

9. It is not wrong to take appropriate initiative to find a spouse. 3:1b Pr. 21:5

**10. God's will must be accomplished in God's way and in God's time. 3:12 Ps. 27:14
25:3 37:34 62:5 130:5 Isa. 25:9 40:31**

11. God still brings together men and women who can serve Him together and help each other.

12. Some are called to serve God as singles. 1 Cor. 7:8,25,32-34

13. Once you are married show lovingkindness to the spouse God has chosen for you.

**C. What we need more than romance is redemption. Ps. 19:14 Ex. 6:6 15:13 1 Pet. 1:18f
Heb. 4:1ff 2:14-17 Rom. 10:11,13**

Discussion questions

1. How has Naomi changed since chapter 1?

2. What do you think of Naomi's plan?

3. Why is Boaz a perfect choice for a husband?

4. What biblical basis was there for Ruth to approach Boaz?

5. What were the risks of Naomi's plan? What could have gone wrong?

Should Ruth have refused?

6. How is love demonstrated in Ruth 3?

7. Why wasn't Boaz offended or shocked by Ruth's proposal?

8. What does this passage teach about a woman's true value?

9. What does this passage teach us about marriage?

10. Contrast the world's idea of romance with that portrayed in the book of Ruth.

11. In what areas of your life are you tempted to be impatient, rather than waiting for God to work out His plan in His way and in His time?