

## The Book of Ruth

### LESSON 10

Chapter 3:10-18

"Ruth's Rest" Continued

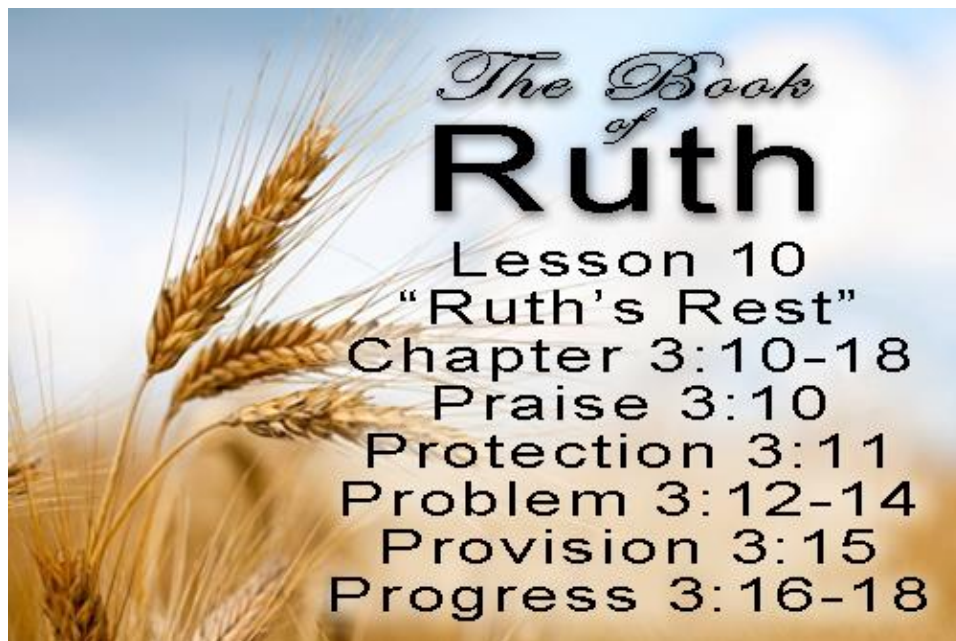
Praise 3:10

Protection 3:11

Problem 3:12-14

Provision 3:15

Progress 3:16-18



#### **LAST WEEK:**

Naomi sent Ruth on a mission to acquire the owner of the barley and wheat fields, Boaz, as a husband. Here's our outline and text for what we covered.

## I. Ruth's Rest Ruth (Part-1) 3:1-9

- A. **Plan: 3:1-4** Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? 2 "And now is not Boaz our kinsman, with whose maids you were? Behold, he winnows barley at the threshing floor tonight. 3 "Wash yourself therefore, and anoint yourself and put on your best clothes, and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. 4 "And it shall be when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies, and you shall go and uncover his feet and lie down; then he will tell you what you shall do."
- B. **Promise: 3:5** And she said to her, "All that you say I will do.
- C. **Promptness: 3:6** So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law had commanded her.
- D. **Presence: 3:7** When Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came secretly and uncovered his feet and lay down.
- E. **Predicament: 3:8-9** And it happened in the middle of the night that the man was startled and bent forward; and behold, a woman was lying at his feet. 9 And he said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth your maid. So spread your covering over your maid, for you are a close relative."
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## **BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THIS WEEK'S LESSON**

In this week's lesson we'll see who this man Boaz is on the inside. We'll see what he thinks and feels about Ruth, the Moabite, who has come to his harvest bedside seeking a husband.

## **THE VISUALIZED TEXT** (NASB)

**Praise: 3:10**

*Then*

*he said,*

*"May you be blessed of the LORD,  
my daughter.*

*You have shown your last kindness  
to be better than the first*

*by not going after young men,  
whether poor or rich.*

## **Brief Commentary on Ruth 3:10**

This paragraph begins with the word "Then," a clear indication from the author that something "new" is going to happen now.

Boaz has been keeping track of the things Ruth has done on Naomi's behalf, and on his behalf. Also, she could have come to him just as a woman needing a man, but she also came wanting him for her husband. He also acknowledges that he is older and that he is extremely grateful for choosing him as her expected kinsman-redeemer and not seeking a younger man (regardless of their wealth).

Boaz is showing his Godly character. He knows that he cannot accept the request made to him. He now sees Ruth as the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to him, even though he must refuse her offer. In the last lesson we listed his reasons, and just to review... Boaz is not the closest qualifying relative to become the Kinsman-Redeemer, If he marries her without disqualifying the closest relative – they will both violate the law.

If they make love together, they violate the law. If he sleeps with her and then does not marry her – they both become guilty of immorality and violate the law. If he sleeps with her now, expecting to become the Redeemer, they both will violate the law and be fornicators. Finally, if they are seen that night, they will be thought to be breakers of the law and brought into the synagogue for trial. All this makes for a terrible predicament.

But Boaz, what a man of God! We have temptation, opportunity, and yet without sin. On top of that he offers Ruth the blessing of the LORD, calls her "My daughter," and thanks her for choosing him over the many eligible young men (many of them rich).

Can you see the parallel here with Jesus as the Kinsman-Redeemer? Think of the love He has in being obedient to His heavenly Father. Think of all the sins of all those under His care that His death would cover-over. What if He did not faithfully follow the Law of God during His lifetime... and become disqualified as the Kinsman-Redeemer? God in a human body, with a human brain – yet completely holding to the plan and discipline of almighty God – even unto death.

Can you see the wonderful picture here? Have you ever pictured almighty God as one who blesses you and thanks you everyday for the opportunity to be His bride? Oh Father, I confess that I am not like you, grant me your grace and thank you for your redeeming Son.

Every one of us has an almighty Father who loves you so much that he sent His only Son to die in place of you – that you might have eternal life.

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### **(3:11) Protection**

***"And now,  
my daughter,  
do not fear.***

***(for)***

***I will do for you whatever you ask,  
for all my people in the city know that  
you are a woman of excellence.***

### **Brief Commentary on Ruth 3:11**

"And Now..." Again, we see this special introduction which brings about another change of scene.

Boaz opens his talk with Ruth by calling her "My daughter" again, and then tells her "Do not fear." There could be multiple meanings here. There may be the normal fear of the local folk finding out that Ruth has visited Boaz in the field at night, or Boaz could be telling her not to worry because everyone knows that she is an excellent and Godly woman, therefore he will follow her (Naomi's) plan. Boaz is also telling her gently that there is good news and bad news in her proposal – but we'll take that up in the next verse.

Boaz promises her that he will do (for her) whatever she will ask of him (remembering that Naomi told Ruth that Boaz would tell her what to do), and Boaz's reason for doing whatever she requests is based upon the **city people** knowing **her character**, i.e., she would never request Boaz to do anything of a questionable nature. Boaz considers Ruth's character – in the public's eye, as more important than his own. He feels that whether he is able to be her husband or not, the city people will not see Ruth's move as other than from a woman of excellent character. What Ruth fears, and Boaz comforts her, is that the city people will think that Boaz is an old fool falling for this young "floozy." It is Boaz that tells her that her own character will prevent anyone from thinking that.

Reading between the lines we can see that there is much that is not in the story about Ruth. Up until this point, aside from Ruth's deep commitment to Naomi, we have not heard from Ruth. The story has not given us much of a glimpse into her life and motivations. It has all been about Naomi – until now. Ruth has been such a blessing to Naomi, Boaz, and now we find out, the whole city. This Moabite, this gentile who has come to God is known amongst the Jews as a Godly woman of excellence.

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### **Ruth 3:12-14 Problem**

**12**

**"And now  
it is true I am a close relative;  
however,  
there is a relative closer than I.**

**13**

**"Remain this night, and  
when morning comes,  
if  
he will redeem you,  
good; let him redeem you.**

**But**

**if  
he does not wish to redeem you,  
then  
I will redeem you,  
as the LORD lives.**

**Lie down until morning."**

**14 So**

**she lay at his feet  
until morning and**

***(she) rose before one could recognize another; and he said,  
"Let it not be known  
that the woman came to the threshing floor."***

### **Brief Commentary on Ruth 3:12-14**

Boaz immediately recognizes the problem. He is of her family. He is qualified, under the law, to be a kinsman-redeemer. But there is one who is more qualified – under the law – to take the rightful responsibility for Ruth's need. If Boaz marries Ruth without going through the process of finding the rightful first kinsman-redeemer, then they both will violate the law. He must settle the "account" with this first qualifying kinsman – first!

The revelations about Boaz and Ruth's character continue in this verse. As we come full circle with this "Problem" we see two very Godly people working out a hopeful but difficult situation. We've said it before, Boaz wants Ruth, Ruth wants Boaz. Ruth is resting on Naomi's command – "Do everything Boaz tells you to do." Boaz is resting on his knowledge of what is right, righteous, and according to the Law. He is trusting "as the LORD lives" in the graciousness and righteousness of the LORD. He, Boaz, will do what is RIGHT, even if it means losing Ruth to another.

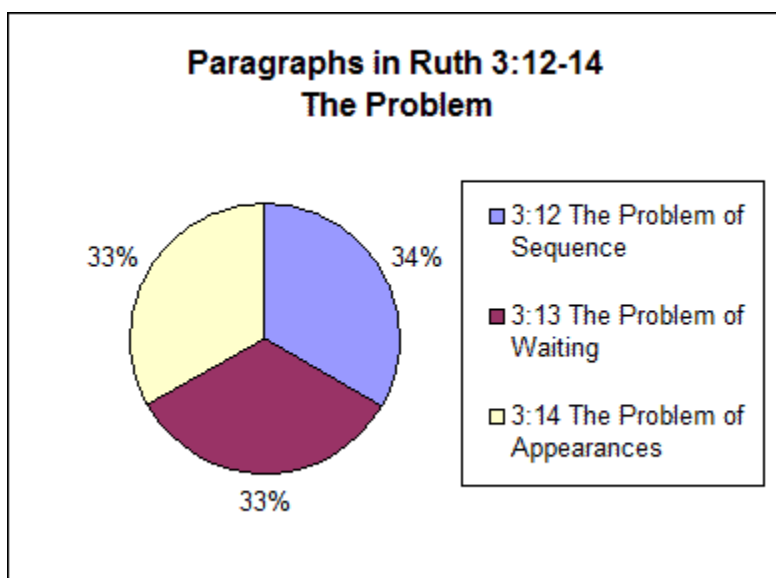
Boaz finds his solution for the problem but cannot take action on it until the next day. With his quick mind he has done the family lineage and found that there is another who is legally more qualified to take on the responsibilities of the kinsman-redeemer. It must be painful for him to tell this to Ruth. However, his hope-against-hope attitude allows him to tell her that, "If he does not wish to redeem you, then I will redeem you, as the LORD lives!" And he means it!

His immediate predicament is that he has a young lady, on his bed, that he wants desperately, whom his character will not allow him to take human advantage of the situation. He tells her to "lie down until morning." That could be an open invitation to an

immoral act, but... We cannot allow ourselves to read into one verse of scripture any meaning or application that does not fit with the rest surrounding scripture. The transition from verse 13 to 14 must be made, we cannot just end at 13 and our human assumptions.

Verse 14 leaves us with no other option but to believe exactly what it says. Following his command, she lays down – from then until morning – at his feet! And then her next act is to get up and leave. No seemly event, nothing out of character for the two people we have come to know well. They talked, she went to sleep at his feet (in the position of one who respects the other as lord over her), and she woke up and left. No messy American melodrama, no final seemly goodbyes.

She was up just before light, still dark enough so that her identity would not be known (and according to the text not known). The text hints that another, probably the foreman (and early arrival at the field) who perhaps sees a woman leave, but not her identity. Boaz's instruction to the observer is "keep this to yourself." Who or why this woman was here is of no one else's concern. Neither Ruth nor Boaz needs to say, "It's not what you think it is."



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### **3:15 Provision**

**Again**

*he said,*

*"Give me the cloak that is on you and  
hold it."*

**So**

*she held it, and*

*he*

*measured six measures of barley and  
laid it on her.*

**Then**

*she went into the city.*

### **Brief Commentary on Ruth 3:15**

Boaz is a man of character who keeps giving and giving. This time it is a gift of grain for Naomi. He does this as a "thank-you" and as an indication that Ruth has gone to see Boaz and he wants Naomi to get the message that he is going to "provide" the right answer for Ruth's predicament.

Ruth now returns home. The translator says she went "into" the city. The Hebrew word means to go to, into, forth, in, to pass, call, carry, and both the KJV and the NASB translators have chosen "into." As I read this translation it calls to mind a young lady, moving quickly in the early dark morning, going deep into the city as if to get lost or at least out of sight.

But before she can leave Boaz speaks "again." He tells her to "hold it." She's wearing a cloak, and she stretches forth a portion of it and forms it into a bag where Boaz loads several handfuls of clean winnowed grain. It could be that this bundle of barley could be a gift to Naomi, one that tells her that the law has been kept during this night.

Deuteronomy 8:6-8

*"Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him. For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; A land of **wheat, and barley....**"*

Then without hesitation, or last goodbyes, she leaves and goes into the city. Deep into the city where she is no longer a woman returning from a mission, but just another dark figure on an early morning, in the semi-dark, away from prying eyes and suspicious minds.

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### **3:16**

#### **And when**

***she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did it go, my daughter?" And she told her all that the man had done for her.***

Ruth has successfully made the journey from the Fields of Boaz back to Bethlehem and Naomi's home. Just above we have already mentioned the reception between Ruth and Naomi. Things did not go as she had expected. She went to him looking for her kinsman-redeemer and found that "another relative" was closer in kin to her and could have that responsibility. She was then sent home and told to wait upon Boaz. Yes, she would be redeemed, but by whom? But she will wait upon Boaz.

Do you remember back when you were saved? Was there a time when you knew you needed Jesus but hadn't made the full decision yet. That's where Ruth is at this moment in the story. This is what she needs, this is what she wants, but the moment is not yet right.

"How did it go?" To me it seems like Ruth must have had a dazed look on her face when she came into Naomi's kitchen – Naomi

didn't ask "did he agree to marry you?", but "How did it go?" The Hebrew seems to indicate an oblique question, almost stereotypical "How you, daughter?"

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### **3:17**

**And**

*she said,*

*"These six measures of barley*

*he gave to me,*

**for**

*he said,*

*'Do not go to your mother-in-law  
empty-handed.'*"

We have already touched upon the measures of barley that Boaz gave to Ruth to give to Naomi and the more I think on this moment in their lives the more I think it is all about remembering the promises of the LORD.

Boaz has kept the law with Ruth that night, now Boaz will keep the law even if it means losing Ruth. He loves Ruth, but he loves his LORD and His commandments even more.

Ruth opens up to Naomi, probably close to tears, and tells her all. Don't let your imagination run wild here, for she tells her all... Boaz has done for her! Have you ever been with someone like that, so gracious, so kind, to you? I had the opportunity, many years ago, to get George Beverly Shea, in a cab, from the Boston airport and take him to the Songtime radio studios, where I was the tech. I rode in the back seat with this grand man. I had heard him on the radio, seen him in movies, seen him on television, knew that he spent years with Dr. Billy Graham, and here I was sitting with him. We spent almost an hour travelling, in very heavy traffic, just four miles in the cab. Do you know what he wanted to talk about for that hour? Me... A Twenty-four-year-old,

insignificant, gopher guy, me. I've never forgotten him and the graciousness of the Lord in him. That's what Boaz was like.

Now Ruth must wait upon Boaz. The events of this day will shape her life and change her forever.

### **3:18**

#### **Then**

***she said, "Wait, my daughter, until you know how the matter turns out;***

#### **for**

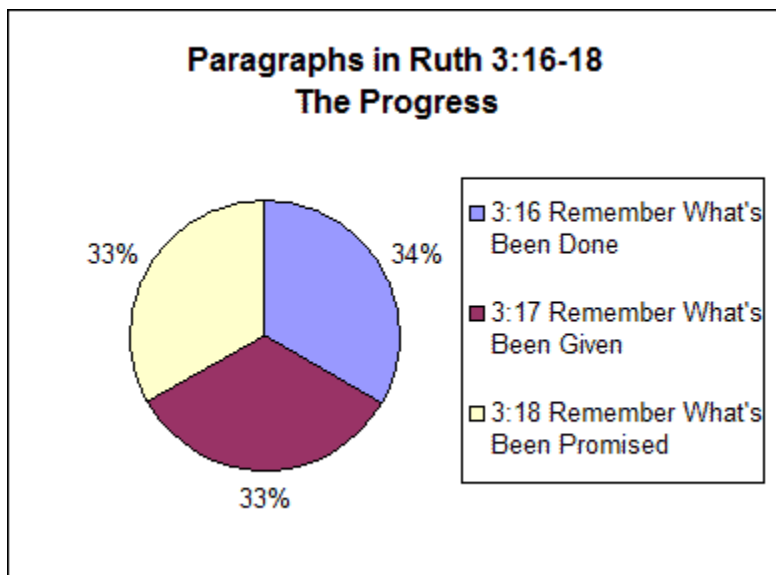
***the man will not rest until he has settled it today."***

Naomi's first sentence is a must learned sentence. "Wait" until you know how the matter turns out, for so many people jump to conclusions and spoil a good final result – because they didn't wait till the proper moment.

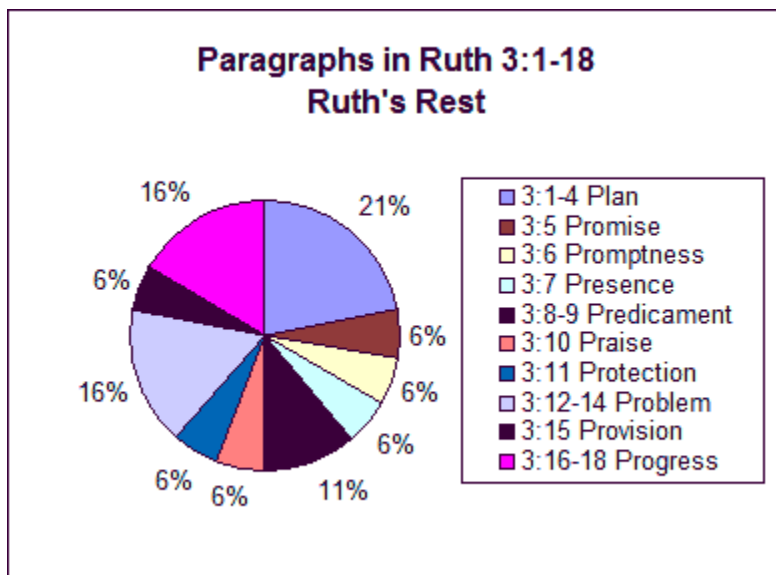
Naomi is touched by the meaning of the barley, and Boaz's words, "... *If he [the law's first redeemer choice] will redeem you, good; let him redeem you. But if he does not wish to redeem you, then I will redeem you, as the LORD lives...*" (3:13)

Naomi tells Ruth, "Don't sit down like a judge" (Heb: yahsab). Don't judge Boaz, don't judge Naomi, don't judge this other kinsman. Wait upon the LORD.

## Verse Percentage Chart for Ruth 3:16-18



## Verse Percentage Chart for Ruth 3:1-18



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Jeremiah 18:15

"Don't stumble from the Ancient Path."

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