

“The One That Didn’t Get Away” (Ruth 1–4)

Perhaps you’ve heard the expression, “It’s better to have loved and lost than never loved at all.” Well, I’m here to tell you that I fell in love with the woman of my dreams and nearly lost her to another man. You could say that she was the one that almost got away. But I’m getting ahead of myself. Did I mention that my name is Boaz? No? Please forgive me. Let me back up and I will tell you the story that changed my life forever.

Many years ago, there was a famine in my land. In my day famines were often an expression of God’s discipline upon His people.¹ This particular famine happened **“in the days when the judges governed.”** This period in Israel’s history is recorded in an obscure Book of the Bible called Judges.² You’re probably not very familiar with it. Most pastors refuse to preach Judges because it is rated R for gratuitous violence and lewd perversion. But you should really encourage your pastor to preach it. Even though I’ve just met you, I think you’d really like it.³ Oh, I digress. Anyway, during this famine, one of my relatives, a man by the name of Elimelech moved his family from Bethlehem in Judah to Moab.⁴ Moab was a land of rich soil and adequate rainfall.⁵ Moab seemed to offer everything that Bethlehem didn’t. Elimelech whose name means “my God is King” thought a move to Moab was the best solution for feeding his family. Unfortunately, he didn’t seek the Lord on this decision; instead, he pursued his own path. Elimelech failed to live up to his name “my God is King.” This has always struck me as odd because Bethlehem means “house of bread” and Judah means “praise.” This is akin to gang warfare in Philadelphia, the city of brotherly love, or demonic activity in Los Angeles, the city of Angels.⁶ So Elimelech and his family left the “house of bread” in the place of “praise” and journeyed to Moab in search of “bread crumbs,” or better yet a “bread basket.” This act of disobedience was an attempt to escape God’s discipline. How foolish to try to outrun the long arm of the Lord.⁷ Elimelech died after reaching Moab. His wife Naomi was left to raise their two sons.⁸ Their boys married Moabite women named Ruth and Orpah.⁹ Eventually the sons also died¹⁰ leaving behind three widows to fend for themselves.¹¹ About that time, Naomi learned that bread was once again flowing in the “house of bread.”¹² Then, and only then, did she decide it was time to go back home to Bethlehem. Obviously, this was not an evidence of personal revival; it was a sign of desperation. She was seeking food and was after her own well-being.

On the way home Naomi told her daughters-in-law that they should return to Moab and find husbands.¹³ Both young women refused, but Orpah eventually conceded. Ruth, on the other hand, adamantly refused.¹⁴ Ruth said, **“Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me”** (1:16–17). Ruth chose Naomi, Naomi’s people, and Naomi’s God over her people, her gods, and her culture. Ruth is not a Jew, yet she embraced God¹⁵ and was converted.¹⁶ When I learned of this episode, I thought to myself, “The young man who marries this woman will be blessed for life.” Men, you know what I’m talking about, don’t you? Of course you do!

From that moment forward Ruth and Naomi were bonded together by love and friendship.¹⁷ Tragically, Ruth’s amazing commitment had little immediate impact on Naomi’s disposition. When they arrived in Bethlehem, Naomi was recognized by several women of the village who remembered her. But she urged them to no longer call her Naomi which means “pleasant” but rather Mara meaning “bitter.” She chose this name because she felt that the Lord had dealt very bitterly with her. Naomi even took the name of God which is characteristically involved in comforting those in sorrow—*Shaddai*—and used it to accuse God of mistreating her.¹⁸ What a contrast Naomi and Ruth are. Ruth is an astounding woman while her mother-in-law is very bitter lady. I couldn’t help but think to myself: I pity the man that ends up with this woman as his mother-in-law. That poor fellow could have a very difficult life, if you know what I mean. Men, do any of you know what I mean? What a second, don’t answer that!

Ruth and Naomi returned to Bethlehem in the late spring about the time of the barley harvest. As they settled into their new home, Ruth decided to work so that she could provide for herself and her mother-in-law. Naomi informed Ruth that under the Old Testament Law, God had made provision for the poor by allowing them to glean grain from the fields after the harvesters had finished their work.¹⁹ As a result, the poor often gathered in the fields a distance behind the harvesters to gather up that which remained. Since there was little else a virtuous widow could do in that culture to provide for her needs, Ruth willingly entered into the fields. This was a risky move. Even though the gleaners were ensured a means to provide for themselves under the Law, they were not always welcomed by the landowners. Furthermore, sometimes they were abused emotionally and physically by the reapers who considered them easy prey.

To make matters worse, Ruth was a young and attractive widow from Moab. Moabites are ancestors from Lot. They came from an incestuous relationship between Lot and his daughters.²⁰ They also led Israel's men into sexual immorality and pagan worship.²¹ Moabite women know their way in the bedroom. You were labeled if you were a Moabite woman. Even though Ruth had become a believer in the Lord, an immoral reputation is hard to shake. Furthermore, Ruth was a foreign girl living in a hostile land. The Moabites were considered enemies because they mistreated the Israelites when they left Egypt.²² Jews hated Moabites. Poor Ruth! In spite of all of this, Ruth was willing to risk working in the fields of Bethlehem without a protector. No doubt, Ruth suspected she might have to try several fields before finding one in which she could be safe. As it worked out, the field she chose first would be the only field she would have to work. Wouldn't you know it, Ruth ended up in my field. Coincidence? I don't think so. God was the guiding hand behind this apparent coincidence.²³

When I visited my reapers in the field, it didn't take me long to notice Ruth. I immediately felt great compassion and concern for her. I urged her to glean only in my fields and to glean among those who were doing the actual reaping. I offered her the food and water I had provided for my own reapers. I warned the men in my fields not to abuse Ruth but to even leave extra grain in the field for her to glean. I was extremely impressed with Ruth. What was attractive was Ruth's work ethic. Of course, she was a beautiful woman as well. I am may be old, but I'm not dead! I even offered a prayer for her. In my prayer, I said, **“May the LORD reward your work, and your wages be full from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to seek refuge”** (2:12). After I prayed this simple prayer, it seemed that the Lord's hand of blessing was indeed upon Ruth. By the end of Ruth's first day, she had about “an ephah of barley” (2:17). This may not sound like much to you, but I can assure you it is an enormous amount! An ephah of barley weighed about thirty pounds.²⁴ This woman was putting many of my male servants to shame! But Ruth didn't stop there. She continued to work hard for the next seven weeks or so.²⁵ She was an impressive woman indeed. I couldn't help but be attracted to her. Ruth's work ethic, character, and godliness only enhanced her physical beauty making her the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. I was falling in love.

Despite all of Ruth's work, she and Naomi realized that our grain she collected would not last forever. They would have to come up with another solution to meet their needs. But I was in the midst of wrapping up the harvest season. Even though I am an old man, I worked hard. I too put a lot of my young servants to shame. But that's another story for another time. Anyway, one day, I work particularly hard and long. At the conclusion of my day, I decided to treat myself to a good meal. I had some luscious lamb and fine wine. I didn't go overboard, but I was feeling a wee bit merry by the time I hit the sack on the threshing floor. Yes, the threshing floor. It was customary for the landowner and his workers to “camp out” on the threshing floor. For however long it took to complete the harvest, everyone associated with the harvest lived on the threshing floor of the farm.²⁶ I realize that you are not familiar with this, but in the Book of Judges, there was a group of Midianite raiders who would attack us every year during harvest time. They would ride in on their camels and overpower us with their military might and confiscate our grain. Well, this was our livelihood! So we decided that we would sleep on the threshing floor with our grain. If the Midianites wanted to steal our grain, they would have to deal with us.

Now back to my story. After I finished my meal, I turned in. I was dead tired. As soon as my head hit my pillow, I drifted off into a deep sleep. At about midnight, I woke up and sensed someone was laying at the foot of my bed. Of course, I knew this couldn't be the case so I tried to go back to sleep. But I couldn't shake that nagging feeling that someone was at the foot of my bed. All of a sudden, I realized that my feet were uncovered and very cold. I had been "short-sheeted!" I shot up and saw a human figure and bravely blurted out, "Who are you?" A female voice responded, "**I am Ruth your maid. So spread your covering over your maid, for you are a close relative**" (3:9). Ruth was proposing marriage! She asked me to answer my own prayer.²⁷ She was seeking a place of shelter under my wings of love and provision. I had to rub my eyes and slap myself a few times just to make sure I wasn't dreaming. I couldn't believe it! I wanted to shout "hallelujah"—Praise the Lord!!! This beautiful and virtuous woman was asking me to marry her. Have I mentioned that I am an old man? I don't know how many of you men have been proposed to but this doesn't happen to me every day...typically only once a week or so. (I'm kidding.) I was beside myself. I was going to marry the woman of my dreams.

Perhaps you're thinking it sure is odd that a young foreign woman would propose to an old man like me. I don't blame you for thinking that. I admit I'm not much to look at. Let me back up and try to explain what happened in as simple terms as possible. In my day, God had assigned each family of each tribe a section of land. Land was extremely important (and still is) to Israel. In order to make sure the land stayed in the family, the kinsman redeemer law was instituted. If a man died and left a widow and no sons, his nearest relative would be given the opportunity to buy his land and marry his widow so that she could have sons to carry on the deceased's name. This relative would be obligated, at his own expense, to buy back the property and return it to the relative who had sold it. If the nearest relative refused, then the next closest kin would take on the role of the redeemer. There was a catch, however. The kinsman-redeemer couldn't make the decision to redeem on his own. He had to be asked by the widow to buy back her husband's land.

As an Israelite woman, Naomi understood the Law related to the kinsman redeemer. So she launched her matchmaking plan. I learned after the fact that Naomi had instructed Ruth to wash, anoint herself with perfumes, and dress well.²⁸ Needless to say, her plan worked! I was ready to sweep Ruth off her feet and marry her at that very moment. Remember, I may be old, but I'm not dead.

As I was having romantic notions like I was a man half my age, a thought hit me like a chariot! There was one who had a prior claim to Ruth should he choose to take it. In a moment of weakness, I was sorely tempted to keep this information from Ruth. I wanted to marry her so badly. But I quickly made the choice to not seek my own interest and hide the truth for my own gain. Instead, I told Ruth that I would ensure that one of us would act as her kinsmen and I would settle the details of the matter in the morning. I then told Ruth to spend the night. Now before your mind starts to wander, I can assure you that nothing happened.²⁹ I told her to stay with me so that she would be safe. I didn't want her to wander home at midnight. Remember, I lived in the days of the judges. It would not have been safe for a woman to walk home alone. I also wanted to protect both of our reputations. A Moabitess slinking home from my camp would be seen as immoral. I didn't want anyone to get the wrong impression. So I sent her away early in the morning with grain so it appeared that she worked.

I have to tell you though, that night I found it impossible to sleep. Try as I might, I found it impossible to catch even a wink of shuteye. My soul was in agony and turmoil. All I could think about was I was on the verge of losing the woman of my dreams. Yet, I couldn't help but think there was always a remote chance that the kinsman redeemer would refuse his legal right. I asked myself, "Has God showing me a favor over the course of my life?" I had to answer, "Of course! He has been good to me in every area of my life." I made a decision that I would trust in his sovereignty. Nevertheless, I also prayed with fervor that the Lord would give me the desires of my heart.

When morning finally arrived, I didn't just roll out of my bed like I usually do. It wasn't my typical, "Good Lord, morning?" This time I jumped out of bed and exclaimed "Good morning, LORD!" I had a spring in my step. I had what I call the three v's: vim, vigor, and vitality. The first thing I did was make my way to the city gate. I needed to find Ruth's nearest relative...and quickly! Wouldn't you know it, the moment I sat down, the first person I saw was *peloni almoni*.³⁰ The English equivalent is "John Doe"³¹—Ruth's kinsman redeemer. Coincidence? I think not. I invited him to sit down. According to the legal customs of my day, I gathered ten elders of the city to witness the transaction. I then told Mr. Doe that Naomi planned to sell a piece of property. By Jewish Law, a family could not sell their land outside of their own family. This meant that Mr. Doe and I were the only qualified purchasers. I told him that the Law granted him first dibs on Naomi's land. Mr. Doe immediately responded, "I will redeem it!" At that moment, my heart sunk into my sandals. I was going to lose the woman of my dreams. I then realized I needed to pull out all the stops. I said to Mr. Doe, "I'm not sure you understand this arrangement. You see, this is a package deal. When you buy Naomi's field you must also acquire Ruth the Moabite. Furthermore, you must father a child with her and carry on her relative's line. The son or daughter that you conceive will then inherit the property that you will own. You should've seen Mr. Doe's face. His gloating smile turned into a frown. He looked like he had sucked a lemon. I could almost see the wheels turning in Mr. Doe's mind. He was weighing the sacrifices of a blended family. Let's face it, while blended family's make tremendous sacrifices, they are more than worth it. It was an agonizing moment. Finally, he quietly muttered, "I won't be able to redeem the land after all." Mr. Doe explained that he was unwilling to jeopardize his own inheritance. I leaned toward him and asked, "What did you say?" He repeated his statement and declined his legal right. I was beside myself! I wanted to do somersaults and cartwheels. To seal the deal my relative took off his sandal and gave it to me. The giving of a sandal was like a signed contract in my day, especially in cases where land was in dispute. This originated because someone would walk off a field in their sandals in order to measure it. This ancient custom signified he was giving me the right to trample over his rights as a kinsman redeemer. Then before the elders of the city, I declared my intention to marry Ruth.³² I took full advantage of this opportunity. Mr. Doe was unwilling to count the costs. As a result, I capitalized.

We were married and in the process of time, a son was born to us. There was the usual celebration surrounding the birth of a son, but for Naomi, this one was very special. It was the cause of her and the other women of the village worshipping the Lord as they remembered how God had provided the means whereby a family could be redeemed. Naomi, who had become Mara, was Naomi again. We named our son "Obed," which means "worshipped." My son became the great grandson of King David. He is included in the genealogy of Jesus Christ in Matt 1:5. God in His sovereignty chose to include my wife, my son, and me in the Lord Jesus Christ's genealogy!

I learned a valuable lesson through all of this. Scheming does NOT get you ahead. When you give yourself to God He gives you a better life than you could have ever imagined possible. Even though I was tempted to scheme and strategize, I trusted in the Lord and He gave me the best life imaginable. Ruth could have returned to the familiarity and comfort of life in Moab, but she chose to trust in the Lord and submit every area of her life to Him. God gave her the best life imaginable. Naomi finally learned to trust in the Lord. She learned that scheming and complaining did not get her ahead. Only trust in the Lord prevailed in the end. Consequently, God gave her the best life imaginable. Likewise, when you radically commit yourself to God, you get the best life He wants you to have. *God wants to give you the best life imaginable.* All that He asks is that you simply trust Him with it. Will you pray with me? [Pray as Boaz.]

[Descend from the stage to grab a decision card and return to the stage as "Keith."] WOW! That was some story by Boaz, wasn't it? I now have a better understanding of his thoughts and emotions. But obviously Boaz didn't have all the details that we have as members of the body of Christ. A "scarlet thread" runs through the Bible which leads to the crescendo discovery that Jesus Christ is our Kinsman Redeemer.

In the Old Testament, a redeemer must be related by blood, he must be able to pay the redemption price, and he must be willing to do so. John 1:14 says that Jesus took on flesh and blood so that He could relate to us. 1 Peter 1:18–19 specifies that He is able to redeem because He has paid the price for our redemption and Hebrews 9:12 tells us that He is more than willing. Jesus is more than qualified and more than willing. All that He asks is that we receive the free gift of redemption that He offers. Just like Ruth had to ask Boaz to be her kinsman redeemer so you must ask Christ to be your Redeemer. In the same way that Ruth curled up at Boaz's feet, you must lie down at the feet of Jesus and ask Him to save you. Ask Him to cover you with His robe of righteousness.

The New Testament pictures Jesus as the bridegroom and those who believe in Him as His bride. He longs to have a relationship with you, but you need to make the proposal. He's waiting for you to ask Him because we all need a redeemer. The Bible says that we all need someone to rescue us from the slippery slope of sin. You might think that you can't possibly be forgiven for what you've done. That's not true. God can forgive anyone. He forgave a Moabite and He can give you a fresh start as well. And, just as Ruth needed to ask for redemption, so too, you need to ask Jesus to redeem you. He will redeem you...but you must first ask. Are you ready to receive the redeemer? Do so right now.

Scripture References

Ruth 1–4

Leviticus 25:25–34

Deuteronomy 25:5–10

John 1:14; 10:15, 18

Philippians 2:5–8

Hebrews 2:14–15; 10:7

1 Peter 1:18–19

Study Questions

1. Why is it so easy to forsake the Lord and trust in our own human ingenuity? How do I try to solve my own financial, marital, or personal issues? Why do I find it difficult to *first* petition God for deliverance and assistance? Read Matthew 6:25–34. In what specific ways will I begin to turn to the Lord so that He can meet all my needs?
2. When did I first place my faith in Jesus Christ? What was the impetus behind my conversion? In what tangible ways did my life change as a result? How is Jesus Christ still changing me today? Read Colossians 1:28–29; 2:6–7. Am I applying Paul's words to my own life today? If so, what does this look like in my life?
3. How have I seen God's sovereignty operating behind the scenes in my life? What specific actions or experiences can only be attributed to God's divine intervention? Do I make it a practice to express gratitude to God for His unmistakable hand of providence? Read 1 Thessalonians 1:16–18.
4. Am I willing to wait upon God for His very best? In what areas of my life have I been able to do this? What has God brought about as a result? How can I encourage other believers to wait upon the Lord? How can I apply Isaiah 40:28–31 to my own life?
5. What does the redemption of Jesus Christ mean to me? How can I communicate this good news to others? What difference does the great truth of redemption make in my daily life? How can I make sure that this glorious reality does not become some humdrum theological concept?

Notes

¹ See Lev 26:3–5, 18–20; Deut 11:16–17; 28:18, 24. It is possible that this famine is not an indication of God’s judgment (see Gen 12, 26, 46). Regardless, a famine was one of the worst things that could happen in an agricultural society, but there is actually a far more severe famine spelled out in Amos 8:11: “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD, “When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD.”

² In the Hebrew Bible there is no break between Judges and Ruth. We go right from “...everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judg 21:25) to “Now it came about in the days when the judges governed, that there was a famine in the land” (Ruth 1:1). Judges was a period in which Israel would move from disobedience to defeat to deliverance. Because everyone did what was right in his or her own eyes, sin was rampant and God’s people had hardened hearts. The events of the Book of Ruth probably happened early in the period of the Judges as Boaz was the son of Salmon by Rahab the prostitute (Matt 1:5). Though our English Bibles give little indication of it, Ruth is to be interpreted in light of the Book of Proverbs as well. In our English versions, Ruth follows Judges. This order is taken after the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT from c. 200 B.C.). The order of the books of the OT in the Septuagint, which our English Bibles follow, is designed in a roughly chronological order. However, in the Hebrew Bible, Ruth comes after Proverbs. The order of the OT books in the Hebrew Bible is more theological rather than chronological. There is a theological link between the Book of Ruth and Proverbs found with Boaz’s statement that Ruth is a “woman of excellence” (3:11). That exact phrase occurs only one other time in the entire OT in Prov 31:10. Which says, literally, “A woman of strength who can find?” Verses 10–31 are an acrostic poem in Hebrew where each line begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It is a poem praising the virtues of this woman of strength. There are a number of unmistakable connections between Prov 31:10–31 and the Book of Ruth. The poem is about a woman who works hard and is industrious (see also Ruth 2), and whose husband is known in the city gates (see also Ruth 4). The poem ends with these words: “And let her works praise her in the gates” (Prov 31:31). Notice what Boaz says, “All the gates of my people know that you are a woman of strength” (Ruth 3:11). Proverbs gives us a poem about a woman of strength; the author of Ruth gives us a story, or a picture of her. Who is the woman of strength (“excellent wife” in the NASB)? It’s Ruth! Who can find such a wife? Boaz! Boaz has found THE Prov 31 woman! See also John Sailhamer, *NIV Compact Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 213.

³ This is an intentionally humorous remark. The week prior to this Easter sermon, I finished a series on Judges.

⁴ This is the only OT book to focus on the trials of a single family.

⁵ Elimelech and his family would have traveled north to Jerusalem and then crossed the Jordan River at the fords by Jericho. Seeing these sites should have jogged their memories of God’s faithfulness.

⁶ A. Boyd Luter & Barry C. Davis, *God Behind The Seen: Expositions on the Books of Ruth & Esther* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 24.

⁷ See Wayne Watson’s outstanding song “The Long Arm of the Lord”:

<http://www.lyricsdownload.com/wayne-watson-the-long-arm-of-the-lord-lyrics.html>. This song is based upon Psalm 139:7–12 and Isaiah 50:2.

⁸ The names of the two boys are Mahlon (“sick”) and Chilion (“wasting”).

⁹ Ruth means “friendship” and Orpah means “neck.” Interestingly, when the word for “neck” is used in the OT it is often figurative of apostasy (Jer 2:27) or of obstinance, i.e. “stiff-necked” (Exod 32:8–9).

¹⁰ Constable writes, “Elimelech’s death may have been a punishment for leaving the land rather than trusting God (cf. Lev. 26:38). Likewise the deaths of Mahlon (lit. sickly) and Chilion (lit. failing) could have been punishments for marrying women prohibited in the Mosaic Covenant

(cf. Lev. 26:21–22; Deut. 28:18, 32).” Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Ruth*: 2009 ed.

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/ruth.pdf>, 8.

¹¹ Ruth 1:1–5 is the only scene in which the Lord’s name is not found.

¹² This is attributed directly to the Lord in Ruth 1:6.

¹³ Naomi also spoke of returning to the Moabite gods (Ruth 1:15). This is an indication that Naomi was not in a good place spiritually.

¹⁴ The social convention that goes on here is that of two people fighting over who will pay for a meal at a restaurant. Ruth goes above and beyond the social norm.

¹⁵ The author uses the term “to cling” (*davaq*) which is the same word found in Genesis 2:24 where the author explains the significance of marriage.

¹⁶ This conversion can be contrasted with Ruth’s mother-in-law, Rahab, who converted out of the fear of God’s judgment (Josh 2:9–13). God uses multiple motivations to move people to faith in Him.

¹⁷ Ruth epitomizes Prov 17:17:

¹⁸ Four times in Ruth 1:21–22, Naomi places the blame on God. The author uses a particular phrase here to help us as reader understand what type of character Naomi is. She says, “The hand of the Lord has gone out against me.” Elsewhere in the Bible, the ‘hand of the Lord’ goes out against his enemies (Exod 9:1–4; 1 Sam 5:8–9), or against his people who are in rebellion against him (Judg 2:14–15).

¹⁹ See Lev 19:9–10.

²⁰ See Gen 19:1–38.

²¹ See Numbers 25.

²² Deffinbaugh writes, “The Moabites were not Canaanites. While the Moabites were forbidden from entering into the assembly of the Lord to the tenth generation (Deuteronomy 23:3), the Israelites were not commanded to annihilate them, and they were not forbidden to marry them (Deuteronomy 20:10-15; 21:10-14; contrast 7:1-6; 20:16-20). You will recall that when David was being pursued by Saul, he took his parents to the king of Moab for protection (1 Samuel 22:3). At least some of the Moabites were David’s relatives.” Bob Deffinbaugh, “A Light in Dark Days”: http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=1483. . It’s a tragic irony that under Judge Ehud in Judges 3 the Israelites had killed 10,000 Moabites.

²³ The NASB says “...and she happened to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz.” Literally the text reads, “A chance happening happened.” Again, the author is using irony. He speaks as if chance is involved, yet all the while demonstrating through his text that the Lord has been directing these circumstances all along.

²⁴ See Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *The Book of Ruth*. NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1988), 179.

²⁵ Deut 16:9 states that the grain harvests were usually seven weeks or so (late April to early June).

²⁶ Daniel I. Block, *Judges, Ruth*. The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 684.

²⁷ The word “covering” and “wing” come from a similar Hebrew root (*kanaph*).

²⁸ This is very similar to the description of a bride in Ezek 16:9–10.

²⁹ Scholars and Bible students have suggested that the language implies that sexual impropriety occurred between Ruth and Boaz. In some contexts, it is possible that “lying at his feet” *might* imply sexual misconduct. However as Luter notes, “...given the character of both individuals (2:1; 3:11), it surely points to Ruth’s humility, as does her calling herself ‘your maid’ (NASB) twice in 3:9.” Luter & Davis, *God Behind The Seen*, 61.

³⁰ This is the literal Hebrew translation.

³¹ See NET for this rendering.

³² The word group of “redemption” is used over twenty times in Ruth. Albert H. Baylis, *From Creation to the Cross: Understanding the First Half of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 178.