

## ~RUTH (530)

### • Her Loyal Love

### • Requests That Boaz Act As A Repurchaser

- A Moabitess who married Mahlon after the death of his father Elimelech and while Mahlon, his mother Naomi, and his brother Chilion were living in Moab. A famine had caused the family to leave their native Bethlehem in Judah.
- Ruth's brother-in-law Chilion was married to the Moabitess Orpah. Eventually the two brothers died, leaving behind childless widows. Learning that Yehowah's favor was again manifest in Israel, Naomi, accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, proceeded to return to Judah.
- Now it came about in the days when the judges administered justice that a famine arose in the land, and a man proceeded to go from Bethlehem in Judah to reside as an alien in the fields of Moab, he with his wife and his two sons. (**Ruth 1:1**)
- And the man's name was Elimelech, and his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. Eventually they came to the fields of Moab and continued there. (**Ruth 1:2**)
- In time Elimelech the husband of Naomi died, so that she remained with her two sons. (**Ruth 1:3**)
- Later the men took wives for themselves, Moabite women. The name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other **Ruth**. And they went on dwelling there for about ten years. (**Ruth 1:4**)
- In time the two of them, Mahlon and Chilion, also died, so that the woman remained without her two children and her husband. (**Ruth 1:5**)
- And she proceeded to get up with her daughters-in-law and to return from the fields of Moab, for she had heard in the field of Moab that Yehowah had turned his attention to his people by giving them bread. (**Ruth 1:6**)
- And she went her way out from the place where she had

continued, and both of her daughters-in-law were with her, and they kept walking on the road to return to the land of Judah. **(Ruth 1:7)**

- Then Boaz said to the older men and all the people; You are witnesses today that I do buy all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon from the hand of Naomi. **(Ruth 4:9)**
- And also **Ruth** the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, I do buy for myself as a wife to cause the name of the dead man to rise upon his inheritance and that the name of the dead man may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place. You are witnesses today. **(Ruth 4:10)**

### •• Her Loyal Love

- Whereas Orpah finally returned to her people at Naomi's recommendation, **Ruth** stuck with her mother-in-law. Deep love for Naomi and a sincere desire to serve Yehowah in association with his people enabled **Ruth** to leave her parents and her native land, with little prospect of finding the security that marriage might bring.
- Finally Naomi said to both of her daughters-in-Law; Go, return, each one to the house of her mother. May Yehowah exercise loving-kindness toward you, just as you have exercised it toward the men now dead and toward me. **(Ruth 1:8)**
- May Yehowah make a gift to you, and do you find a resting-place each one in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them, and they began to raise their voices and weep. **(Ruth 1:9)**
- And they kept saying to her; No, but with you we shall return to your people. **(Ruth 1:10)**
- But Naomi said; Return, my daughters. Why should you go with me? Do I still have sons in my inward parts, and will they have to become your husband's? **(Ruth 1:11)**
- Return, my daughters, go, for I have grown too old to get to belong to a husband. If I had said I had hope also that I should certainly become a husband's tonight and also should certainly bear sons. **(Ruth 1:12)**

- **Would you keep waiting for them until they could grow up? Would you keep yourselves secluded for them so as not to become a husband's? No, my daughters, for it is very bitter to me because of you, that the hand of Yehowah has gone out against me. (Ruth 1:13)**
- **At that they raised their voices and wept some more, after which Orpah kissed her mother-in-law. As for Ruth, she stuck with her. (Ruth 1:14)**
- **So she said; Look! Your widowed sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Return with your widowed sister-in-law. (Ruth 1:15)**
- **And Ruth proceeded to say; Do not plead with me to abandon you, to turn back from accompanying you, for where you go I shall go, and where you spend the night I shall spend the night. Your people will be my people, and your God my God. (Ruth 1:16)**
- **Where you die I shall die, and there is where I shall be buried. May Yehowah do so to me and add to it if anything but death should make a separation between me and you. (Ruth 1:17)**
- **Then Boaz answered and said to her; The report was fully made to me of all that you have done to your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, and how you proceeded to leave your father and your mother and the land of your relatives and to go to a people whom you had not known formerly. (Ruth 2:11)**
- **Her love for her mother-in-law was such that, later, others were able to say that she was better to Naomi than seven sons.**
- **And he has become a restorer of your soul and one to nourish your old age, because your daughter-in-law who does love you, who is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him. (Ruth 4:15)**
- **Arriving in Bethlehem at the commencement of the barley harvest, Ruth, in behalf of Naomi and herself, went out to the field to procure food.**
- **By chance she lighted on the field belonging to Boaz, a relative of Elimelech, and requested the overseer of the harvesters for permission**

to glean. Her diligence in gleaning must have been outstanding, as is evident from the fact that the overseer commented about her work to Boaz.

- Thus Naomi made her return, **Ruth** the Moabite woman, her daughter-in-law, being with her when returning from the fields of Moab, and they came to Bethlehem at the commencement of barley harvest. (**Ruth 1:22**)
- Then she said; Let me glean, please, and I shall certainly gather among the cut-off ears of grain behind the harvesters. So she entered and kept on her feet from that time in the morning until her sitting down just now in the house a little while. (**Ruth 2:7**)
- When Boaz extended kindnesses to her, **Ruth** responded with appreciation and humbly acknowledged being less than one of his maidservants.
- At mealtime he provided roasted grain for her in such abundance that she had some left over to give to Naomi.
- Later Boaz said to **Ruth**; You have heard, have you not, my daughter? Do not go away to glean in another field, and you must also not cross over from this place, and in that way you should keep close by my young women. (**Ruth 2:8**)
- Let your eyes be on the field that they will harvest, and you must go with them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? When you are thirsty, you must also go to the vessels and drink from what the young men will draw. (**Ruth 2:9**)
- At that she fell upon her face and bowed down to the earth and said to him; How is it I have found favor in your eyes so that I am taken notice of, when I am a foreigner? (**Ruth 2:10**)
- Then Boaz answered and said to her; The report was fully made to me of all that you have done to your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, and how you proceeded to leave your father and your mother and the land of your relatives and to go to a people whom you had not known formerly. (**Ruth 2:11**)
- May Yehowah reward the way you act, and may there come to be a perfect wage for you from Yehowah the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to seek refuge. (**Ruth 2:12**)

- **To this she said; Let me find favor in your eyes, my lord, because you have comforted me and because you have spoken reassuringly to your maidservant, although I myself may not happen to be like one of your maidservants. (Ruth 2:13)**
- **And Boaz proceeded to say to her at mealtime; Approach here, and you must eat some of the bread and dip your piece in the vinegar. So she sat down beside the harvesters, and he would hold out roasted grain to her and she would eat, so that she was satisfied and yet had something left over. (Ruth 2:14)**
- **Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law got to see what she had gleaned. After that she took out what food she had left over when she had satisfied herself and gave it to her. (Ruth 2:18)**
- **Though Boaz arranged matters to make it easier for her to glean, Ruth did not quit early but continued to glean until the evening, after which she beat out what she had gleaned, and it came to be about an ephah, 22 liters. (20 dry quarts] of barley. Having been requested by Boaz to continue gleaning in his field, Ruth did so during the remainder of the barley harvest, as well as the wheat harvest.**
- **Then she got up to glean. Boaz now commanded his young men, saying; Let her glean also among the cut-off ears of grain, and you must not molest her. (Ruth 2:15)**
- **And you should also be sure to pull out some from the bundles of ears for her, and you must leave them behind that she may glean them, and you must not rebuke her. (Ruth 2:16)**
- **And she continued to glean in the field until the evening, after which she beat out what she had gleaned, and it came to be about an ephah of barley. (Ruth 2:17)**
- **Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law got to see what she had gleaned. After that she took out what food she had left over when she had satisfied herself and gave it to her. (Ruth 2:18)**
- **Her mother-in-law now said to her; Where did you glean today, and where did you work? May the one who took notice of you become blessed. So she told her mother-in-law with whom she**

had worked, and she went on to say; The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz. (Ruth 2:19)

- At that Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. Blessed be he of Yehowah, who has not left his loving-kindness toward the living and the dead. And Naomi went on to say to her; The man is related to us. He is one of our repurchasers. (Ruth 2:20)
- Then **Ruth** the Moabitess said; He also said to me; Close by the young people that are mine is where you should keep until they have finished the entire harvest that I have. (Ruth 2:21)
- So Naomi said to **Ruth** her daughter-in-law. It is better, my daughter, that you should go out with his young women, that they may not annoy you in another field. (Ruth 2:22)
- And she continued to keep close by the young women of Boaz to glean until the harvest of the barley and the harvest of the wheat came to an end. And she kept on dwelling with her mother-in-law. (Ruth 2:23)

#### •• Requests That Boaz Act As A Repurchaser

- Desiring to find a resting-place, or home, for her daughter-in-law, Naomi instructed **Ruth** to request Boaz to repurchase her. Accordingly, **Ruth** went down to Boaz threshing floor.
- After Boaz lay down, **Ruth** quietly approached, uncovered him at his feet, and lay down herself. At midnight, trembling, he awoke and bent forward. Not recognizing her in the dark, he asked;
- Naomi her mother-in-law now said to her; My daughter, ought I not to look for a resting-place for you, that it may go well with you? (Ruth 3:1)
- And now, is not Boaz, with whose young women you have continued, our kinsman? Look! He is winnowing barley at the threshing floor tonight. (Ruth 3:2)
- And you must wash and rub yourself with oil and put your mantles upon you and go down to the threshing floor. Do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. (Ruth 3:3)

- **And it should occur that when he lies down, you must also take note of the place where he lies down, and you must come and uncover him at his feet and lie down, and he, for his part, will tell you what you ought to do. (Ruth 3:4)**
- **At that she said to her; All that you say to me I shall do. (Ruth 3:5)**
- **And she proceeded to go down to the threshing floor and to do according to all that her mother-in-law had commanded her. (Ruth 3:6)**
- **Meantime Boaz ate and drank, and his heart was feeling good. Then he went to lie down at the extremity of the grain heap. After that she came stealthily and uncovered him at his feet and lay down. (Ruth 3:7)**
- **And it came about at midnight that the man began to tremble. So he bent himself forward, and, look! A woman lying at his feet! (Ruth 3:8)**
- **Then he said; Who are you? In turn she said; I am Ruth your slave girl, and you must spread out your skirt over your slave girl, for you are a repurchaser. (Ruth 3:9)**
- **Ruths actions, in compliance with Naomi's instructions, must have been in line with the customary procedure followed by women when claiming the right to brother-in-law marriage. In Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, Paulus Cassel makes this observation regarding**
- **Then he said; Who are you? In turn she said; I am Ruth your slave girl, and you must spread out your skirt over your slave girl, for you are a repurchaser. (Ruth 3:9)**
- **Undoubtedly this symbolical method of claiming the most delicate of all rights, presupposes manners of patriarchal simplicity and virtue. The confidence of the woman reposes itself on the honor of the man.**
- **The method, however, was one which could not easily be brought into operation. For every foreknowledge or pre-intimation of it would have torn the veil of silence and secrecy from the modesty of the claimant.**

- But when it was once put into operation, the petition preferred could not be denied without disgrace either to the woman or the man. Hence, we may be sure that Naomi did not send her daughter-in-law on this errand without the fullest confidence that it would prove successful.
- For it is certain that to all other difficulties, this peculiar one was added in the present case, namely, that Boaz, as Ruth herself says, was indeed *a goel*, a repurchaser, but not *the goel*.
- The answer of Boaz, also, suggests the surmise that such a claim was not wholly unexpected by him. Not that he had an understanding with Naomi, in consequence of which he was alone on the threshing-floor, for the fact that he was startled out of his sleep, shows that the night visit was altogether unlooked for.
- But the thought that at some time the claim of **Ruth** to the rights of blood-relationship might be addressed to himself, may not have been strange to him.
- Even this conjecture, however, of what might possibly or probably take place, could not be used to relieve **Ruth** of the necessity of manifesting her own free will by means of the symbolical proceeding. [Translated and edited by P. Schaff, 1976, p. 42]
- That Boaz viewed Ruth's actions as being completely virtuous is evident from his reaction; Blessed may you be of Yehowah, my daughter.
- You have expressed your loving-kindness better in the last instance than in the first instance, in not going after the young fellows whether lowly or rich.
- **Ruth** unselfishly chose Boaz, a much older man, because of his being a repurchaser, in order to raise up a name for her deceased husband and her mother-in-law.
- As it would have been a natural thing for a young woman like Ruth to prefer a younger man, Boaz viewed this as an even better expression of her loving-kindness than her choosing to stick with her aged mother-in-law.
- At that he said; Blessed may you be of Yehowah, my daughter.



You have expressed your loving-kindness better in the last instance than in the first instance, in not going after the young fellows whether lowly or rich. (**Ruth 3:10**)

- **Doubtless Ruth's voice must have reflected some anxiety, prompting Boaz to reassure her; Now, my daughter, do not be afraid. All that you say I shall do for you, for everyone in the gate of my people is aware that you are an excellent woman.**
- **The hour being late, Boaz instructed Ruth to lie down. However, both of them got up while it was still dark, evidently to avoid starting any rumor that would cast a bad reflection on either one of them. Boaz also gave Ruth six measures of barley.**
- **This may have signified that, just as six working days were followed by a day of rest, Ruth's day of rest was at hand, for he would see to it that she would have a resting-place.**
- **Naomi her mother-in-law now said to her; My daughter, ought I not to look for a resting-place for you, that it may go well with you? (**Ruth 3:1**)**
- **And now, my daughter, do not be afraid. All that you say I shall do for you, for everyone in the gate of my people is aware that you are an excellent woman. (**Ruth 3:11**)**
- **And now while it is a fact that I am a repurchaser, there is also a repurchaser closer related than I am. (**Ruth 3:12**)**
- **Lodge here tonight, and it must occur in the morning that if he will repurchase you, fine! Let him do the repurchasing. But if he does not take delight in repurchasing you, I will then repurchase you, I myself, as sure as Yehowah lives. Keep lying down until the morning. (**Ruth 3:13**)**
- **And she kept lying at his feet until the morning and then got up before anyone could recognize another. He now said; Do not let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor. (**Ruth 3:14**)**
- **And he went on to say; Bring the cloak that is on you, and hold it open. So she held it open, and he proceeded to measure out six measures of barley and to place it upon her, after which he went into the city. (**Ruth 3:15**)**

- **And she went on to say; These six measures of barley he gave me, for he said to me, Do not come empty-handed to your mother-in-law. (Ruth 3:17)**
- **At that she said; Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out, for the man will have no rest unless he has brought the matter to an end today. (Ruth 3:18)**
- **Upon Ruth's arrival, Naomi, perhaps not recognizing the woman seeking admittance in the dark, asked; Who are you, my daughter? Or, it may be that this question pertained to Ruth's possible new identity in relationship to her repurchaser.**
- **And she went her way to her mother-in-law, who now said; Who are you, my daughter? Accordingly she told her everything that the man had done to her. (Ruth 3:16)**
- **Later, when the nearer relative refused to perform brother-in-law marriage, Boaz promptly did so. Thus Ruth became the mother of Boaz son Obed and an ancestress of King David and also of Jesus Christ.**
- **As for Boaz, he went up to the gate and began to sit there. And, look! the repurchaser was passing by, whom Boaz had mentioned. Then he said; Do turn aside, do sit down here, So-and-so. Hence he turned aside and sat down. (Ruth 4:1)**
- **After that he took ten men of the older men of the city and said; Sit down here. So they sat down. (Ruth 4:2)**
- **He now said to the repurchaser; The tract of the field that belonged to our brother Elimelech, Naomi, who has returned from the field of Moab, must sell. (Ruth 4:3)**
- **As for me, I thought that I should disclose it to you, saying; Buy it in front of the inhabitants and the older men of my people. If you will repurchase it, repurchase it, but if you will not repurchase it, do tell me, that I may know, for there is no one else but you to do the repurchasing, and I am next to you. At that he said; I shall be the one to repurchase it. (Ruth 4:4)**
- **Then Boaz said; On the day that you buy the field from Naomi's hand, it is also from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead**

man, that you must buy it so as to cause the name of the dead man to rise upon his inheritance. (**Ruth 4:5**)

- To this the repurchaser said; I am unable to repurchase it for myself, for fear I may ruin my own inheritance. You repurchase it for yourself with my right of repurchase, because I am not able to do the repurchasing. (**Ruth 4:6**)
- Now this was the custom of former times in Israel concerning the right of repurchase and concerning the exchange, to establish every sort of thing. A man had to draw his sandal off and give it to his fellow, and this was the attestation in Israel. (**Ruth 4:7**)
- So when the repurchaser said to Boaz; Buy it for yourself, he proceeded to draw his sandal off. (**Ruth 4:8**)
- Then Boaz said to the older men and all the people; You are witnesses today that I do buy all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon from the hand of Naomi. (**Ruth 4:9**)
- And also **Ruth** the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, I do buy for myself as a wife to cause the name of the dead man to rise upon his inheritance and that the name of the dead man may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place. You are witnesses today. (**Ruth 4:10**)
- At this all the people that were in the gate and the older men said; Witnesses! May Yehowah grant the wife who is coming into your house to be like Rachel and like Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel, and you prove your worth in Ephrathah and make a notable name in Bethlehem. (**Ruth 4:11**)
- And may your house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, from the offspring that Yehowah will give you out of this young woman. (**Ruth 4:12**)
- Accordingly Boaz took **Ruth** and she became his wife and he had relations with her. So Yehowah granted her conception and she bore a son. (**Ruth 4:13**)
- And the women began to say to Naomi; Blessed be Yehowah, who has not let a repurchaser fail for you today, that his name may be proclaimed in Israel. (**Ruth 4:14**)

- **And he has become a restorer of your soul and one to nourish your old age, because your daughter-in-law who does love you, who is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him. (Ruth 4:15)**
- **And Naomi proceeded to take the child and to put it in her bosom, and she came to be its nurse. (Ruth 4:16)**
- **Then the neighbor ladies gave it a name, saying; A son has been born to Naomi. And they began to call his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, David's father. (Ruth 4:17)**
- **Now these are the generations of Perez, Perez became father to Hezron. (Ruth 4:18)**
- **And Hezron became father to Ram, and Ram became father to Amminadab. (Ruth 4:19)**
- **And Amminadab became father to Nahshon, and Nahshon became father to Salmon. (Ruth 4:20)**
- **And Salmon became father to Boaz, and Boaz became father to Obed. (Ruth 4:21)**
- **Salmon became father to Boaz by Rahab. Boaz became father to Obed by Ruth. Obed became father to Jesse. (Matthew 1:5)**
- **Jacob became father to Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. (Matthew 1:16)**