

Introduction: Here is a question for everyone listening. Let us all ask ourselves: Have I ever been convinced that God is asking me to do something humanly impossible, borderline insane, and very daring in that some people would consider it immoral? If anyone is answering this question 'no', I suggest this person ask God: Have I indeed truly surrendered myself to You in order to always do Your will? *** Ruth is a good example for all of us because God asked her to accept and do just such a task. Although what Naomi assigned to her to do was in full compliance with the Torah, how could a young foreign woman dare to approach a highly respected, strong and wealthy pillar of the community in the middle of an open field, in the middle of the night, and crawl under a corner of his blanket? *** What would the people in the town think of her, and Boaz, if they saw her? Not to mention, what would this man who had been so gracious to her think of such a seemingly impudent act? *** Yet this very act eventually led to the birth of Jesus. He would say: One who is asking is receiving; and, one who is seeking is finding. Is this not exactly what Ruth did according to Naomi's instruction? *** Let's dig into this story about Ruth and Boaz to discover what God was doing in one of the most beautiful love stories of all time between two people of excellent character.

I. Naomi desires rest for Ruth and instructs Ruth how to approach Boaz; when he discovers her during the night, she asks him to be her kinsman-redeemer; he is delighted, but there is a closer relative. (Ruth 3:1-13)

- A. Naomi desires rest for Ruth, so she instructs Ruth to approach Boaz that night, and he will tell her what to do. (Verses 1-5)
1. Then, Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her: My daughter, shall not I seek rest for thee, that it will be good to thee? Now, is not Boaz our relative whom you have been with his young women? Behold! He is winnowing barley at the threshing-floor tonight. (Verses 1-2)
Rest: Naomi seeks 'rest' for Ruth for her own good. She reminds Ruth that he is a relative she knows. Furthermore, he is accessible to her that night.
 2. Thou (will) have washed, anointed thyself, and put on thy best clothes; then go to the threshing-floor; thou will not make thyself known until he finishes eating and drinking; when he lies down, notice where he lies; then thou uncover his feet and lie down; he will tell thee what to do. (Verses 3-4)
Prepare: First, Naomi wants Ruth to be at her most attractive to all Boaz's senses. Then she is to go to him fully respecting his needs for food and sleep.
Acknowledge: She is to come close to him and wait. Naomi is confident in Boaz's reaction.
 3. Then [Ruth] said: All which thou wilt say to me, I will do. (Verse 5)
Consent: As from the beginning of their journey to Bethlehem, Ruth pledges total loyalty to Naomi.
- B. Ruth does as Naomi instructed, when Boaz discovers Ruth she asks him to cover her as a kinsman-redeemer; he is delighted, but there is a relative closer to her father-in-law than him. (Verses 6-13)
1. Then she went down to the threshing-floor, and did just as her mother-in-law told her. (Verse 6)
Obedience: She followed Naomi's plan exactly.
 2. Then when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was good, he went to lie down at the end of his heap (of barley); then she came secretly, uncovered his feet and laid down. (Verse 7)
Secretly: The word could mean mysteriously. Nebuchadnezzar discovered Daniel could understand God's mysteries (Daniel 2). But Ruth acted on a clear directive from the Torah (Deuteronomy 25:5-6; Numbers 27:8-11). Approaching a man alone in an open field at night, and lying at his feet pleasantly prepared is a daring act, she did it because Naomi's God is now her God (Ruth 1:16).

Dare to act according to God's will from His Word

3. In the middle of the night the man was startled and turned over; Behold! a woman laying at his feet; he said: who (are) thee? She said: I (am) Ruth, thy maidservant; spread thy 'wing' over thy maidservant, for thou (are) kinsman-redeemer. (Verses 8-9)
Startled: Boaz was actually trembling at woman being so near! He asked for her name.
She proposes: She told him. Then in humility and submission to God's will and Word, she asks to be taken under his 'wing', that Boaz would marry her. It is a daring request based on faith in God.

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Application: We should be like Ruth in that we should determine to dare to take bold action when we are convinced by the Holy Spirit and God's Word that a seemingly impudent action is indeed God's will.

4. He said: you be blessed by Yahweh my daughter; thou have done right this kindness over the first; you did not go after young men (poor or rich); my daughter, fear not, because all you ask, I will do; because all in the gate are knowing thee a woman of excellent character. (Verses 10-11)
Boaz blesses Ruth: He blesses Ruth because she did not choose youthful vigor over him. Rather she chose him for the qualities of his character: gracious, kind, fair and God-fearing.
Boaz commends Ruth: The man of strong character (Ruth 2:1) sees the same qualities in Ruth.
5. True that I (being) kinsman-redeemer; and, also, exists kinsman-redeemer nearer than me; thou must abide the night; in the morning if he will redeem thee – good; but if not he desires kinsman-redeemer to thee, I will indeed redeem thee, as Yahweh lives, lie down until morning. (Verses 12-13)
One closer: There is one obstacle: Elimelech had a kinsman nearer to him than Boaz. He must be given the opportunity to choose in the city gate in the morning.

Wait: Meanwhile, Ruth must wait for God's will. Many times, God requires people to wait for His will in order to strengthen their faith and hope in Him (Isaiah 40:31). Ruth has dared, now she waits.

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II. Boaz sends Ruth to Naomi with food, when she questions Ruth, she tells all Boaz did; Naomi tells her to remain because Boaz will not be quiet; Jesus commands His followers to ask to receive. (Ruth 3:14-18; Matthew 7:7-8)

A. Boaz sends Ruth to Naomi with barley; when Naomi questions her, Ruth tells her all Boaz did, then Naomi tells her to remain because Boaz will not be quiet. (Ruth 2:14-18)

1. Then she lay at his feet until morning, then she arose before man could recognize his neighbor; then he said it will not be known that a woman came to the threshing-floor. (Verse 14)

Ruth leaves early: Ruth rose before people could discern one another, and Boaz urged discretion.

2. Then he said: bring thy cloak, thou must hold it; then she held it and he measured six of barley and put it on her, then he went to the city. (Verse 15)

Barley: Before he settles the kinsman-redeemer status, he again provides food for Ruth and Naomi.

Both to city: Boaz went to the city gate to settle before the elders. Ruth went to Naomi's city house.

3. Then she came to her mother-in-law; then she said: what to you, my daughter? Then she told her all which the man did to her; then [Ruth] said: these six (of) barley he gave to me because he said: thou will not go empty to thy mother-in-law. (Verses 16-17)

Naomi's question: Naomi waited all night to know what Boaz would do for them. Now she asks.

Ruth's answer: Ruth told her everything including Boaz's willingness to cover Ruth with his 'wings'; but also of the existence of a closer kinsman-redeemer. Finally, she produces his gift of food.

4. [Naomi] said: Thou must remain (sit) my daughter until thou will know how this thing will 'fall out', because the man will not be quiet, but the thing settled today. (Verse 18)

Remain: Naomi commands Ruth to sit still while Boaz negotiates with the closer kinsman-redeemer before the elders of Bethlehem at the city gates.

Not quiet: Although the outcome is uncertain, Naomi is sure Boaz will talk everything through to the final resolution – one way or the other. The women must hope in the faith of God's goodness. He has been good to them in that it is in Boaz's heart to fulfill their daring request of him.

Application: As with Naomi and Ruth we must all wait in hope and faith after we dare to act boldly according to God's will.

Dare to act according to God's will from His Word

B. Jesus commands His followers to ask because those asking are receiving. (Matthew 7:7-8)

1. [Jesus said]: Y'all must be asking and it will be given to y'all; y'all must be seeking and y'all will find; y'all must be knocking and it will be opened to y'all. (Verse 7)

Command-promise: Jesus uses the format of a command from God to His people, followed by a promise from God to those who obey – three times. To those asking, it will be given to them; to those seeking, they will find; to those knocking, it will be opened to them. The context indicates these amazing promises are given to those who have had their sins removed by the faith of Jesus (verses 3-5).

2. Because each one asking, is receiving; and, the one seeking, is finding; and to him knocking, it will be opened. (Verse 8)

Starting now: The receiving and finding are present realities. The opened (by God) door is future.

Bottom line: All people asking God according to His will have the assurance of a positive answer, sooner or later (1 John 5:13-15).

Jesus: When Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection, approached Jesus with a 'hypothetical' concerning kinsman-redeemers they thought would expose the folly of resurrection. Jesus proved the truth of resurrection; and, He would prove Himself to be THE Kinsman-Redeemer (Matthew 22:23-32).

Surrendered faith: Before Jesus gave God's promises to answer prayers of faith by people cleansed of sin, Ruth was sure the Covenant God would make Boaz her kinsman-redeemer by the end of the day.

Application: In light of all we have discovered from God's Word, we must always ask according to the truth of God's Living Word - Jesus, with full faith in Him that He will eventually answer our request, even while He is still acting to fulfill our request

All who ask God, will receive from Him

Conclusion: Naomi desires rest for Ruth and instructs Ruth how to approach Boaz. When Boaz is made aware of her during the night, she asks him to be her kinsman-redeemer. He is delighted with her request, but there is a closer relative. In the early morning, when Boaz sends Ruth to Naomi with food, she questions Ruth. Ruth tells her all Boaz did and said. Naomi tells her to remain still because Boaz will not be quiet. Jesus commanded His followers to ask God in order to receive from Him.

Dare to act according to God's will from His Word