

A Conversation of Hope #8

Ruth 2: 19-23

As I studied this wonderful passage I was reminded of the change that has taken place in such a short time. In the beginning verses, Naomi and Ruth had returned from Moab with little hope or confidence in the future. Little did they know that God was working on their behalf and had made provision for them.

Ruth set out one morning to glean in the fields, hoping to find enough leftovers to sustain two widows without any means of providing for them-selves. You can believe what you will, but I am convinced that God led her to the field of Boaz. It was in his field that Ruth found favor and abundance in one she had never met. A day that began with uncertainty and fear had ended with hope and provision.

Now the day has ended and Ruth has made her way back home. It is then that she discusses the unbelievable events of the day. I want to examine the conversation that Ruth had with Naomi as she returned from the field of Boaz. This conversation has a much different tone than the words that were shared between these women previously. As we consider the wonderful **truths** revealed in the text, I want to preach on: **A Conversation of Hope**. Their conversation dealt with two particular topics: **They talked of a Man** and **They talked of a Plan**. Notice first of all:

I. They Talked of a Man (19-20) – Keep in mind that Ruth has just returned with an ephah of barley, about a half bushel, enough to sustain them for a week. Naomi was quick to ask where Ruth had gleaned. It is then that they begin to discuss this man, Boaz. Their conversation reveals Boaz was:

A. A Man of Interest (19a) – And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. Naomi was already aware that Ruth had been shown unusual kindness and favor. She had brought an abundance of grain home, more than was typically found gleaning among the leftovers. She was curious who had taken knowledge of her while in the field. Who had shown interest in the Gentile widow from Moab?

- I rejoice in the day that Jesus took knowledge of me. I am grateful that He was interested in the soul of one who was undeserving. He came to me even when I was unaware of Him and blessed me with His abundance!
- These verses offer hope to all of humanity. He is interested in each and every soul that has entered this sinful world. He was so interested and concerned with our need that He was willing to die so that we might live!

B. A Man of Integrity (19b) – And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz. Naomi had no idea where Ruth had gleaned. She rightly supposed that she had been in the field of a gracious man, but hadn't realized that she had been in the field of Boaz. Naomi knew Boaz and his character.

- V.1 – And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz. We have already discussed the character of Boaz in a previous study, but I want to remind us of his integrity. He was a man known of his kinsman. He was a man of wealth and resources. He was thought of in high regard.

- Remember that Boaz pictures Christ our Lord. We too have a Man of integrity who cared and provided for us. I am blessed to have relations with those of integrity, but none compare to my Lord. There are none like Him. Heb.5:9 – And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Phil.2:9 – Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: Rev.19:16 – And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

C. A Man of Involvement (20a) – And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. Boaz chose to get involved in Ruth's situation. He could have been critical of her. He could have shunned her because she was a Gentile. He was obligated to let her glean around the edge of the field, but he was not obligated to provide for her as he did. He chose to provide for her.

- Isn't it comforting to know that we serve One who chose to get involved in our situation? He chose to meet our need in the sacrifice of His body on the cross. He chose to leave the splendor of heaven, laying aside His glory for a robe of flesh, to walk among lowly men, even humbling Himself as their servant, so that we might be redeemed and restored unto the Father!

- He chose to get involved in our salvation and He continues to be involved in our lives today. It would have been enough to provide for our redemption and never offer another blessing. By doing that He provided far more than we deserve, but our blessing did not end with our conversion. In fact they only began. Christ continues to meet our needs and bless our lives! Ps.68:19 – Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah. Ps.40:5 – Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

D. A Man of Influence (20b) – And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen. Naomi well understood the significance of Boaz's relation to them. She knew he was a kinsman who had the potential and the resources to redeem them from their despair. Knowing that Ruth had gleaned in his field offered hope for the future. Boaz was able to completely transform their lives!

- Many today just need to see Jesus for who He is. He has the power and the ability to transform a life of sin to a life of eternal hope. He can take a life that is filled with sin and shame and create a new creature for His glory. None can do what Jesus can do. None can influence and transform as He!
- Jn.9:25 – He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. 2 Cor.5:17 – There-fore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. The influence of Jesus is powerful and it is lasting. When He changes a life, it is for eternity!

II. They Talked of a Plan (21-23) – In the remaining verses we find that Naomi was aware of the significance of Ruth's encounter with Boaz. Naomi offers some words of wisdom regarding Ruth's conduct in the future.

A. A Word of Instruction (21) – And Ruth the Moabite said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest. Here Naomi and Ruth discuss the words of Boaz. He spoke of:

1. The Place – Ruth was instructed to stay by his servants, only in his field. If she was to enjoy the harvest, she had to stay in the field.

- The same is true for us as well. It makes no difference whether we are believers seeking the abundance of the Lord or a lost sinner seeking salvation. We must abide in the field of grace. Heb.10:25 – Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

2. The Time – Ruth was also instructed to remain in the field until all the harvest was ended. She had to know where to be and when to be there. This wasn't something for the faint of heart or uncommitted.

- We too must be where God would have us to be at the appointed time. Many have missed their blessing because they were not there at the appointed time.
- Today is the day of salvation for those who are seeking the Lord. Now is the appointed time. 2 Cor.6:2 – (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.) If God is dealing with your heart, there is no time like the present.
- The saved are called on to be mindful of the time as well. We are nearer the Lord's return than ever before. Hosea 10:12 – Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you. Eph.5:16 –Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Heb.10:25 – (above.)

B. A Word of Exhortation (22) – And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.

Naomi offers words of exhortation, words of encouragement to Ruth regarding the field of Boaz. This exhortation is actually three-fold. Naomi spoke words of:

1. Comfort – It is good, my daughter. Moab had brought little to rejoice about. They had suffered great loss and devastation there. But now in Bethlehem, among the field of Boaz, there was renewed hope.

- We all face trials and difficulties in life. We have all seasons of heartache and despair, but all is not lost. There is hope in the Lord. It is good to dwell near Him. Naomi also spoke a word of:

2. Confidence – It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens. Naomi was aware that Ruth had gleaned in the field of Boaz. She was confident in his ability to provide for them. She was not worried or concerned about Ruth's well being or their future. She was in a good place.

- There is much that the world offers that is questionable at best. It offers little that brings hope, encouragement, or even benefit. We can be confident in our blessed Lord and even in His people. There is nothing like gleaning in the field of grace alongside the children of God! Naomi also offered:

3. Caution – It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field. She knew that Ruth was where she needed to be. Naomi likely realized that God's hand had led Ruth to the field of Boaz. She was warned to stay in his field and not be found in another!

- We need to watch the company we keep. We need to be mindful of the fields in which we glean. There is much in this life that may appear to be upright, but in reality it is just a deception of the enemy. We must be careful where we go, with whom we associate, and what we glean and consume when it comes to matters of our spiritual well being! We have been called to be among the world, but not of the world.

➤ Ruth 2:23 – So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law. In closing we find that Ruth stuck to the plan. She headed the instruction of Boaz and the exhortation of Naomi. She was committed to the field of grace until the end of the harvest. She remained committed to Naomi as well, just as she had promised.

➤ We need to realize that the best intentions in the world are of no benefit if we are unwilling to remain committed to the cause. We must endure for the Lord. We must abide near Him, in the field of His abundant grace. We must determine to seek the good and well being of those whom we labor with. I want to do all I can for the glory of God and the good of His people!

We have considered a conversation that took place thousands of years ago between two widows that the world had given up on. It appeared that their lives would end in utter devastation, but God had a plan for them.

There is wisdom in these words that we need to head in our day as well. Have you considered the Man, Jesus Christ? Are you willing to follow the plan that He has for your life? There is hope, joy, and abundance in Him.