

**HARRINGAY UNITED CHURCH-BAPTIST  
SUNDAY AUGUST 21, 2011**

Topic: Joy in the morning

Text: Ruth 3-4

**Introduction**

The book of Ruth started with the death of 3 husbands Elimelech, Mahlon and Kilion.

Mahlon and Kilion were Elimelech and Naomi's sons. Mahlon married to Ruth while Kilion married to Orpah. But since the death their husbands, Naomi, Ruth and Orpah became widows in the land of Moab.

The news came to Naomi that God has blessed her land (Bethlehem) in Judah and she decided to go back home. The daughters' in-law decided to go with her but she persuaded them to return to their parents with reason of old age that she was unable to bear another son who could have married them. Orpah returned but Ruth insisted to follow her mother in-law without knowing where she was going and what was on offer for her. That was a brave and strong faith decision.

God being faithful and provident, He directed Ruth to glean in Boaz who happened to be one of her kinsman redeemer. Boaz had been generous to Ruth each time they met in his farm.

Looking at Naomi, she had been faced with calamities, three funerals of her own husband, and two sons. May that be not anyone's portion in Jesus name.

Let us see what God did for Naomi and Ruth in today's texts.

**The Narrative:**

One day, Naomi instructed Ruth to present herself to Boaz in threshing floor on a particular night he would be there. In those days, farmers take it in turn to use the threshing floor to winnow their grains and that day was Boaz's turn. Usually the farmers will sleep in the field to protect their grains. What must Ruth do?

Ruth must wash, perfume herself and wear her best clothes. She must go to the threshing floor not allowing Boaz to know that she was there because it was prohibited for women to be there at night (Ruth 3:14)

The instruction goes further that Ruth must note where Boaz lies down after he had eating and drinking. She should now go and uncover his feet and lie there and then he will tell you what to do.

Of course at night Boaz was startled because he experienced an unusual thing, unexpected guest was in the threshing floor and even at night. He queried who it was and he got the reply Ruth your servant. She then said 'spread the corner of your garment over me since you are a kinsman redeemer'.

Boaz blessed Ruth and said this kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier. You have not run after the younger men whether rich or poor. He then promised to do what she requested but cautioned that there is a man who was a nearer kinsman than him and he refused to redeem her then Boaz will do it.

Boaz gave 6 measures of barley to Ruth and warned her not to let anyone know that she had come to the threshing floor. Providence is on your way.

Boaz wasted no time he called a meeting with the city elders and the nearer kinsman to redeem the land and Ruth but the man refused because he believed that his own estate will be in jeopardy and that leaves Boaz to do it and he did it without delay and through the marriage Obed the father of David was born.

This is how a story of three funerals and a wedding ended. The story that started with tragedy ended with joy and not a one- time joy but everlasting joy because through this

family our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save us from our sins and give ever flowing joy.

### **What does this mean to me now?**

In the East, washing is necessary because of heat and dust hence they always have some water for washing feet in their homes. Also in the Old Testament, washing is required for special events (Gen 35:1-3).

All Naomi's instruction is to make Ruth look and smell presentable to her future husband. Although as a widow and a foreigner Ruth may not have many clothes but she would have had a least one special for special occasion and this is the best time to use that and that is sufficient to secure her future and blessing.

### **Washing with water:**

Water is for cleansing to take our dirt and filths away and in the Scripture it signifies life (Rev 21:6; 22:1 & 17).

We are here today still dirty and stinking in our sins and unrighteousness, Christ gave His life for us to redeem us and He is cleaning us by washing us through His Word. If we are obedient to His word, we are cleansed and made holy Ephesians 5:26.

### **Anointing:**

Anointing with fragrant oil is for healing, setting apart for special task and making sweet aroma pleasing to God and people around.

How many times we look again at those who wear sweet perfume? Anointing also speaks of the presence of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives. Therefore, we must be fragrance of Christ to our heavenly Father and attraction to people around us so that they can come to our Father through Christ.

If Christ needed and depended on the Holy Spirit during His earthly ministry, we ought to need much more of the Holy Spirit for our daily lives.

This anointing is not with the perfume we buy in the shop, it is not the anointing oil we buy and use in Church, it is anointing with the Holy Spirit, healing us of bitterness, guilt, jealousy, envy and all filthiness. It is the anointing that makes us to give hope to the hopeless, joy to those who are sorrowful, food to the hungry and water to the thirsty. The anointing that enables us to encourage those who are discouraged and to raise the hands of those who are weary.

### **Changing Clothes:**

When we change our clothes we become new persons. Our old clothes that we must change are our sinful nature which is grave clothes. When we ask for forgiveness, the Holy Spirit cleanses us from all our sins and unrighteousness and the righteousness of Christ is put on us which is the garment of grace and mercy. But if we refuse to acknowledge our sins, we are drench in our sins and come short of God's glory and His blessing.

Changing clothes signifies salvation (Isaiah 61:10; Luke 15:22). We cannot come to God in our own righteousness because they are like filthy rags but we can only come to God in the righteousness of Christ and if we are obedient to His will and seek to please God, then our garments will be white (Rev 19:8).

All the above three is our part to play in coming to the presence of God and enjoy His blessing, we must wash ourselves of our filth and dirt, get anointed by the Holy Spirit and change our clothes by changing our sinful attitudes and behaviours.

Then we will be redeemed.

**Let us look at the kinsman redeemer:**

**1. Must be kinsman** - one with the right to redeem: Boaz was a kinsman but he knew that there was another man who was nearer than himself hence he promised Ruth if the person that was nearer was unable to do he will surely do it.

**2. Must be willing** - cannot be forced or coerced: first right person who was to redeem Ruth was unwilling to redeem her because of his own estate and that gave Boaz the right to do it as the next kinsman who was qualified to redeem Ruth

**3. Must have the resources to redeem** - money to pay and the associated responsibilities. Boaz was wealthy and respectable in Bethlehem, he had the money to pay for the land and look after Ruth. He had the temperament and shoulders to carry the weight of the responsibility.

### **Boaz a kind of Christ:**

Some theologians see Boaz as a kind of Christ.

Boaz a kinsman Redeemer, he was a relation who was qualified to redeem that which was lost. Christ the first born from the dead is our brother who was sinless and therefore qualified to redeem us from our sins.

Boaz was willing to redeem the land belonging to Elimelech and Mahlon and as part of the package married Ruth. From there a new life began. A hopeless situation turned into hopeful and confident situation. Death now turned into new life in a child who would be the ancestor of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So Christ laid down His life willingly for us, no body forced Him John 13:17. For as many as would put their faith in Him for as many He will redeem from their sins and death and He will give them eternal life.

Boaz had the resources to redeem Elimelech's land and married Ruth. So is Christ as the only one who left his riches and glory in heaven, came down to earth to be born of Virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, died a cruel death on the Cross for you and me so that we might not die but have eternal life.

John 1:12-13 "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

If you have not confessed Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, this is a perfect opportunity to do that and I am encouraging you to do in a moment when I will lead you.

### **Conclusion:**

The book of Ruth started with three funerals but ended with a wedding and a baby through the provident hand of God.

What are you going through, do you feel like Naomi whose live had been full of bitterness, you have been from one problem to another, it's like your life is a roller coaster. The provident God that turned Naomi's and Ruth's situations is here to turn your own situation around too.

Are you like Naomi who wanted to go home alone by herself, you want to do or handle it by yourself; as God sent Ruth as an instrument of redemption, God will send your own Ruth to you and you will be redeemed of your situation. However, when he sends you your Ruth, do not reject her you need her.

Christ is our kinsman Redeemer and he is willing to redeem us of our situation, He is qualified to do it as all powers and authority on earth and heaven has been given to Him and He shares that with those who believe and put their trust in Him.

Whatever the situation is, turn it over to Christ. The God who turned funeral into a wedding and birth of a baby will turn your situation into joy as well.

As joy came to Naomi through Ruth and Boaz, your joy is coming in the morning. Weeping may endure for the night but joy is coming in the morning.