

When Destiny is Delayed

When you are walking in obedience, you have to believe God is going to cover you.

Now in those days it was the custom in Israel for anyone transferring a right of purchase to remove his sandal and hand it to the other party. This publicly validated the transaction. So the other family redeemer drew off his sandal as he said to Boaz, "You buy the land."

Ruth 4:7–8 nlt

Waiting on a decision that will have an impact on your future is never easy. Whether it's waiting to hear test results from your doctor, watching for an email with the response to your application, or counting the days until you receive someone else's response to your invitation, the suspense kills you. Your mind tries to think through all the variations of what could happen, might happen, will happen.

You imagine the best case, the worst case, and all the possibilities in between. Clearly, something is about to happen that will alter the path you are on, but you can't yet determine which way the road sign will point.

Boaz had explained the situation to the kinsman who had first rights to marry Ruth and continue the family legacy. He did the honorable thing by playing fair and going directly to the man and explaining the situation. But clearly, after the night when Ruth sneaked into his threshing room, Boaz hoped that somehow this unique and beautiful woman would be his wife. Like an attorney making his closing argument, he would now have to wait to see what the other man would decide.

Somewhere on the other side of town, Ruth and Naomi were waiting anxiously to hear which kinsman redeemer would take Ruth as his wife. They had no clue that they were anxious for

no reason. Long before Ruth met Boaz or even her first husband, Mahlon, God had predestined her steps. She was on reserve for her divine destiny.

How befitting it is that the kinsman takes off his shoe and gives it to Boaz. In their time, removing a sandal and handing it over was to say, "My feet will not walk on your ground." Or perhaps another way of saying this would be, "I don't want to step on your toes. Here, you go ahead." With this simple act, Ruth had officially become Boaz's betrothed, even if she wasn't aware of it yet. She may have felt nervous, but had nothing to worry about.

Can you relate? Anyone who's been through what you've been through would have lost his or her mind by now. One thing after another, tears after tears, yet you are still here. You're tired, you're weary, and you're still harboring old fears of what could go wrong. But now is the time to keep your faith firmly rooted in the goodness of your loving Father's character.

He has been strengthening you, refining you, building you up to handle what lies ahead. You may feel like it's taking too long, or even that the Lord has forgotten you. But consider this: Could it be that God has you on reserve? You may not realize it, but you were bought with a cost. You have been placed on reserve for a higher purpose.

That's why that accident couldn't kill you or the disease missed you. You didn't finish your degree the first time so that you would have the experience to land the promotion you wanted. You handled it all as best you could. Through breakups and makeups, you were placed on reserve. The incidents of the past were stepping-stones to reach the other side of the shore, where your feet are about to walk.

Ruth's situation reminds me of another passage that should give us confidence. Theologians believe that Genesis 3:15 is a

prophecy of the coming of Christ: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (nkjv).

Here, after all that business with forbidden fruit, God tells Satan that the woman’s offspring, humans, will always war against him. In fact, God promises that Eve’s descendants will wound Satan’s head, while he will only wound their heels. The enemy may have won a temporary battle of temptation, but he would lose the final war.

It seems a bit unfair. A head wound is almost always more dangerous than a wound to the heel. Unless, of course, that heel wound makes you take a few missteps. When our heels have been bruised, we start to walk on land that we shouldn’t. We begin to be poisoned by our own fear, bitterness, anger, and doubt. We cannot let what happened to us then consume us now. We may have a limp, but the enemy will ultimately be crushed as we persevere in the power of the Lord.

Through Christ we are able to recover from the bruises of life that can lead us astray. Certainly Ruth knew all too well about the detours of life. As she waited for new information on where her journey would lead her, she had no idea God had already marked her path.

We often worry ourselves sick about something God has already figured out. When you are walking in obedience, you have to believe God is going to cover you. Whether things go the way you think they should or not, when you’re walking with Him, you can trust that He will transform every trial.

Don’t be tricked into thinking that just because you’re delayed you’re also denied. Stay the course, heal your heel, regain your footing, and prepare to use your destiny to wound the enemy’s head.

Excerpted from *Colliding with Destiny* by Sarah

Jakes. Copyright © 2014 by Sarah Jakes. Used with permission of Bethany House Publishers.

Sarah Jakes is the author of *Lost and Found* and *Colliding with Destiny: Finding Hope in the Legacy of Ruth*, from which this excerpt is taken. She oversees the women's ministry at The Potter's House of Dallas, the church led by her parents, Bishop T.D. Jakes and Mrs. Serita Jakes. She regularly blogs and occasionally serves as a TV host on *The Potter's Touch*. Sarah is a mom of two and lives in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Learn more about her and her ministry at .