



## **“GOD’S COVENANT FAITHFULNESS”**

### **WEEK THREE – GOD’S PROVISION**

#### **Read Chapter 3**

One Jewish writer says: *“This love story between Ruth and Boaz can seem peculiar at best and uncomfortable at worst.”* At first reading it seems so far from anything we would understand. Present day society thinks of romance and love at first sight, whereas here, we have something entirely different. Although not a common practice, as it was symbolically proposing marriage, it was considered acceptable within the customs of this culture.

Naomi explained to Ruth that she wanted to seek security for her. Knowing that Boaz had already shown favour towards Ruth when they were in the fields, and that he would be an appropriate husband for her, Naomi wanted to give Ruth the opportunity of a secure future.

- For what reasons do you think Naomi was concerned about a secure future for Ruth?
- Was it interfering, as mothers-in-law are sometimes accused of?
- Do you think maybe Naomi had been prompted by God to do this?
- Are we confident God will take care of us?

#### **Read again Chapter 2:10-12**

*“What have I done to deserve such kindness?” she asked. “I am only a foreigner.” Yes, I know,” Boaz replied. “But I also know about everything you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband. I have heard how you left your father and mother and your own land to live here among complete strangers. May the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge, reward you fully for what you have done.”*

- What do these verses tell us about Boaz?
- What can we learn from this about the importance of OUR testimony?

In verses 2-4, Naomi gives specific instructions about preparing herself for this encounter with Boaz. In verse 5 Ruth again, shows her obedience (genuine, not forced on her), to Naomi:

***“All that you say to me I will do.”***

- In our walk with God, is this how we respond to him?
- Do we try to qualify our possible responses?

As befitting his status, Boaz enjoyed a good meal and something to drink, so he was ready for a good night’s sleep. In the NKJ version it says: *his heart was cheerful!*

I’m sure the last thing he expected was to be woken and find a young woman at his feet. As it was dark, he would not be able to see her clearly and was somewhat puzzled. When Ruth makes herself known to him, she makes a very profound statement : *“Spread the corner of your covering over me, **FOR YOU ARE MY FAMILY REDEEMER**”.* (Or in other translations: **MY KINSMAN REDEEMER.**)

In the Old Testament, this was a male relative who, according to various laws found in the Pentateuch, had the privilege or responsibility to act for a relative who was in trouble, danger, or need of vindication.

“The word **REDEEMER** is first used in the book of **Genesis 3:15** and is the first of a long line of prophecies concerning the coming Messiah – the one who would make things right between God and man. It designates a male relative who delivers or rescues. **Genesis 48:16, Exodus 6:6** redeems property; **Leviticus 27:9-25** receives restitution for wrong done to a relative who has since died; and **Numbers 5:8**.

The unique emphasis of the redemption/salvation/vindication associated with the kinsman-redeemer is the fact that this action is carried out by a kinsman on behalf of a near relative in need.”

We sing that lovely hymn:

There is a redeemer  
Jesus, God's own Son  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah  
Holy One  
Jesus my redeemer  
Name above all names  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah  
Oh, for sinners slain.

We will come back to this in Study Four.

***Read again verses 8-13***

How does Boaz respond? One might say, 'remarkably well', given he was extremely taken aback. When she tells him to spread the corner of his covering over her because he was her family redeemer, he doesn't ask her to give him some time to think about what she is saying but comes back with the positive response in verses 10 and 11.

"The LORD bless you, my daughter!" Boaz exclaimed. "You are showing even more family loyalty now than you did before, for you have not gone after a younger man, whether rich or poor.

Now don't worry about a thing, my daughter. I will do what is necessary, for everyone in town knows you are a virtuous woman.

But while it's true that I am one of your family redeemers, there is another man who is more closely related to you than I am.

Stay here tonight, and in the morning, I will talk to him. If he is willing to redeem you, very well. Let him marry you. But if he is not willing, then as surely as the LORD lives, I will redeem you myself! Now lie down here until morning."

- What might Ruth have felt when she heard these words? Yes, they were very positive BUT ...
- How does he show himself a man of integrity?

On hearing what had happened, Naomi must have sensed a slight reservation in Ruth as she tells her to be patient (how often do we remind ourselves!), because she knew that Boaz would not let them down.

It's a bit like us with God is it not? We read all the positive things but sometimes we let the doubts come in and we question!



## PRAYER

**Thank you for all your wonderful promises. Help us to always trust you at all times and in all circumstances because you are our God.**