

TEXT SUMMARY

In our text (Ruth ch. 3) Naomi sends Ruth to Boaz in a bold plan to propose marriage! Boaz agrees, but he points out that there is a wrinkle, a cultural and legal complication that he must untangle before they can be wed.

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

- **1.** Our text opens with Naomi asking Ruth two rhetorical questions. What are they?
- 2. Naomi's instructions are detailed.
 - What does she tell Ruth to do in preparation for her mission?
 - How is Ruth to approach Boaz with her proposal?
- **3.** What complication does Boaz foresee? When does he plan to deal with that complication? What does he tell Ruth to do in the meantime?
- **4.** What gesture does he offer to tell Naomi that he is aware of the plight she and Ruth are facing?

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

The idea of **redemption** plays a major role in the story of Ruth. The "kinsman-redeemer" was a member of the family who "redeems" or restores another family member in distress. This may take the form of purchasing the freedom of a family member who sold himself into slavery to settle a debt or buying back land an impoverished family member had sold in a time of financial distress.

- **1.** Ruth and Naomi both experience redemption but in different ways. How is Ruth redeemed? Naomi?
- 2. Bible scholars point to Boaz as a "type" or picture of Christ. How is Boaz like Christ, and how is his role in Ruth's restoration like Christ's role in our redemption?

DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE



SO WHAT? (APPLICATION):

- 1. Redemption involves the restoration of "Shalom," the state of stability, harmony, rest, and peace that we all need. When we find Shalom, when we have the sense that at last all is well, our bodies respond with a contented sigh.
 - Can you think of a time recently perhaps after the resolution of a thorny difficulty or after a long hard day's work – you felt a "micro-burst" of Shalom and you let out a content sigh? How long did that feeling of well-being last? What brought it to a close?
 - Can you think of a time in your life when you saw the resolution of a deep and long-term problem, and you experienced redemption and a brief respite of Shalom?
- 2. Can you remember a time (perhaps now) when your distress was so acute that you could see no way out and you began to experience the faith-deepening effect of distress: your heart turning to God as your only hope?
 - If that tension has been resolved, what means did God use to bring about your redemption?
 - In the meantime, how has your faith been deepened as the result of your struggle? What did you learn about God in the testing furnace? What did you learn about yourself?

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