

# A Covenant To Marry

Bible Background • RUTH 1:6–18; 3–4; MATTHEW 19:1–12

Printed Text • RUTH 3:1–6, 8–12, 16–18 | Devotional Reading • HEBREWS 13:1–8

## Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: **SUMMARIZE** the actions that led to the marriage of Boaz and Ruth; **IDENTIFY** the strong trust between Ruth and Naomi; and **CONSIDER** ways to honor marriage and courtship whether we are married or not.

## In Focus

Last year, Kerry ended a sour relationship and moved to a new city. She had many of the things she'd always desired, but she still felt incomplete. Her mom suggested she start dating again.

“Dating? Why would I do that? That’s the thing that got me off track in the first place!”

Her mother also suggested that Kerry stop partying so much. “Think about it, Kerry. When you’re not at work, you’re partying. You aren’t doing the things you really like doing. Be open, that’s when you’ll find a partner.” Kerry was silent. “Just pray on it.”

“Pray? For what?”

“That God will guide you to the right man. You’re working on yourself, so God will find someone who wants to work with you.”

“I never really thought of it that way.”

“All relationships are work, especially your relationships with men. Just like He presented you with this job opportunity, He’ll present the right partner.”

That night, Kerry thought about what her mother had said. She closed her eyes and said a quick prayer, “Lord, thank you for letting me have a fresh start. Thank you for my family and friends. I am ready for what is next. I want to walk toward the one you have for me. Amen.”

*What relationships are you currently working on building or re-creating?*

## Keep in Mind

“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” (Ruth 3:10, NLT)

## Words You Should Know

**A. Kindness** chesed (Heb.) — Compassion, loyalty, mercy.

**B. Winnow** zarah (Heb.) — To fan, scatter, a part of the harvest process separating wheat.

## Say It Correctly

none

### KJV

**Ruth 3:1** Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

2 And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor.

3 Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

5 And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

6 And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.

8 And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

9 And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.

10 And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.

11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.

12 And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.

16 And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

17 And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law.

18 Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

### NIV

**Ruth 3:1** One day Naomi said to Ruth, "My daughter, it's time that I found a permanent home for you, so that you will be provided for.

2 Boaz is a close relative of ours, and he's been very kind by letting you gather grain with his young women. Tonight he will be winnowing barley at the threshing floor.

3 Now do as I tell you—take a bath and put on perfume and dress in your nicest clothes. Then go to the threshing floor, but don't let Boaz see you until he has finished eating and drinking.

4 Be sure to notice where he lies down; then go and uncover his feet and lie down there. He will tell you what to do."

5 "I will do everything you say," Ruth replied.

6 So she went down to the threshing floor that night and followed the instructions of her mother-in-law.

8 Around midnight Boaz suddenly woke up and turned over. He was surprised to find a woman lying at his feet!

9 "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she replied. "Spread the corner of your covering over me, for you are my family redeemer."

10 "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.

11 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.

12 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.

16 When Ruth went back to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "What happened, my daughter?" Ruth told Naomi everything Boaz had done for her,

17 and she added, "He gave me these six scoops of barley and said, 'Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'"

18 Then Naomi said to her, "Just be patient, my daughter, until we hear what happens. The man won't rest until he has settled things today."

## The People, Places, and Times

**Kinsman.** During Bible times, "kinsman" described a person's nearest male relative. He had certain responsibilities according to the law. For example, the kinsman acted as an avenger. A wrong done to one member of a family was considered an offense against the entire group. Kinsmen were obligated to punish the wrongdoer. Also, the kinsman was obliged to act as redeemer and handle financial matters on family members' behalf. These responsibilities could include redeeming property a relative might have sold due to poverty (Leviticus 25:25), ransoming (buying back) his kinsman who may have been sold into slavery (25:47–49), or acting as a go-between in case a person wanted to make restitution to a relative. The role of the kinsman-redeemer also included taking responsibility for the extended family. When a woman's husband died, the law provided she could marry a brother of her dead husband (Deuteronomy 25:5–10). If there were no brothers, the nearest relative to the deceased husband could become the kinsman-redeemer and marry the widow. If he chose not to, the next nearest relative could marry the widow. In order to provide for those widows who did not remarry, the "gleaning laws" were established (Leviticus 19:9–10).

*What situations cause people to take on responsibility for others' well being in our society today?*

## Background

At the end of Ruth 1 and into chapter 2, Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem in time for the harvest of the barley fields. The whole town was abuzz at Naomi's return with her Moabite daughter-in-law. Naomi shared her losses with the women of the community and the story of Ruth's care for her mother-in-law spread throughout the town. Ruth took the initiative to provide for the two of them by setting out to glean behind the reapers. It was custom as a form of charity to allow the poor, widows, orphans, and foreigners to follow behind the harvesters to gather the leftover grain (Leviticus 19:9-10; Deuteronomy 24:19). Through God's providence, Ruth happened to glean the fields owned by Boaz, a relative of Naomi's late husband. Boaz was a noble man of means and he took notice of this unfamiliar young woman. He inquired of her background and learned that she was the Moabite woman who returned with Naomi. After making the familial connection, learning further details of Ruth's story and hearing of her hard work, he approached Ruth. Boaz implored her to stay close to his young women and to not move to another field. He also spoke a blessing of reward for Ruth because of how she honored her mother-in-law, and left her own people to live with Naomi. Boaz further blessed Ruth by making sure she was protected as she worked, she was nourished, and that she could earn a good living to take care of her household. At the end of her workday, Ruth was excited to tell Naomi of her success and learned that the man who blessed her was a relative of Naomi's. Ruth and Naomi settled in, and Ruth continued to work in Boaz's field with the rest of the young women through the barley and wheat harvest season.

*How can reputation and location be key to new opportunities in life?*

### At-A-Glance

1. Partners in Covenant (Ruth 3:1–6)
2. An Interest in Covenant (vv. 8–12)
3. Waiting on Covenant (vv. 16–18)

## In Depth

### 1. Partners in Covenant (Ruth 3:1–6)

In ancient Middle Eastern culture a woman without a husband had little to no public standing, was not secure, and thus needed protection. Out of concern for Ruth's future, Naomi advises Ruth on how to secure a husband by expressing interest in Boaz, who was by marriage her next of kin (Ruth 2:20). Naomi returns Ruth's love and protection, because as an older woman she was secure and would be taken care of (Deuteronomy 14:29, 24:19), but she wanted to ensure Ruth's standing, protection, and provision in the community. There are different schools of thought on Naomi's suggested approach to Ruth. But the planned end result of her advice was in line with the Hebrew levirate marriage custom: In order to keep the deceased man and his inheritance in the family line, the next of kin or kinsman-redeemer would marry his widow (Leviticus 25:25, 48–49). Naomi advises Ruth to get cleaned up, put on her best scented oil, a nice outfit, and to stealthily go to Boaz in the night. She further counsels Ruth to wait until he has retired from his work. She knew that after eating and drinking, he would be good and relaxed, so it would be a good time to make her move. Ruth followed Naomi's counsel as the older woman is teaching the younger one how to ensure their survival by connecting with this man. To some, Naomi and Ruth's plan may appear forward, but in the story of Tamar (Genesis 3) we have another example in Scripture of a woman who also enacted a plan using the same custom to secure her future. Both Tamar and Ruth end up in Jesus' family lineage.

*Why is learning from someone who has experience in our pursuit important?*

### 2. An Interest in Covenant (vv. 8–12)

Boaz awakened to find a woman lying at his feet and discovered that it was Ruth. This suggestive move, to appear in a man's presence at the threshing floor, was a bold one because she was not sure how he would receive her. Ruth asked for Boaz to spread his cloak over her for he was the nearest kinsman or next of kin. The spreading of the cloak signified the desire for acquisition through marriage. His relation to Ruth was not direct but due to her connection to Naomi's family. The love and loyalty shown to Naomi placed Ruth in a position to make such a plea. Boaz was overcome with her gesture and stated how this act of loyalty was better than the first: Ruth could have pursued the application of levirate law with someone younger, rich or poor, or with someone out of her husband's bloodline, but she chose him. Boaz acknowledges her virtue and tells her that the community viewed her not as a foreigner but a worthy woman. He seeks to further protect her purity by committing to do what she has asked, but there was another male relative who would be the actual next of kin. Upon their first meeting, Boaz spoke a blessing over Ruth because of her love and devotion to Naomi (v. 12). God's masterful orchestration fulfilled this word; Boaz had no idea that he would be that blessing in the beginning.

*What role does acting at the right time have in us receiving what God wants for us?*

### 3. Waiting on Covenant (vv. 16–18)

After spending the night at the threshing floor with Boaz, Ruth leaves before anyone can recognize her. Boaz goes through great lengths to protect her reputation in the community because it was against custom for a woman to appear at the threshing floor. He commits to meeting with the men of the community, which includes the actual next of kin to see if he will make the claim or serve as the next of kin (v. 13). Ruth returns to her mother-in-law with her cloak filled with grain because Boaz does not want her to return to Naomi empty-handed.

Naomi asks Ruth for a report of what happened just as a trusted friend and confidant would. As Ruth shares the exchange between her and Boaz, Naomi offers her next pearl of wisdom on how to manage the situation. She instructs Ruth to sit tight and wait until she receives word of the outcome. Naomi knew that Boaz had already made the commitment to be the next of kin because of how he already sacrificed and extended himself to protect and provide, as a good man would. She was confident that Boaz would keep his word and that the matter would be settled by the end of the day.

The book of Ruth can be seen as a picture of God's love for us expressed through His Son Jesus Christ as our next-of-kin redeemer. We have to take the step of receiving God's salvation by trusting in the finished work of Calvary, accepting Jesus into our heart, and living for Him.

*How do you manage waiting on God when in a time of transition or seeking a new opportunity?*

### **Search the Scriptures**

1. Why was it important for Naomi to secure Ruth's future (Ruth 3:1)?
2. What was the significance of Ruth's approach to Boaz and his response to her plea (vv. 9–12)?

### **Discuss the Meaning**

1. Think of times in your life when you've noticed God guiding you through a transition. What were some of the things that you noticed?
2. What are times when you've felt you had to work on yourself and make a dramatic change to your routine?

### **Liberating Lesson**

The Ruth/Boaz story is often romanticized as a picture of how a woman should wait for a man to notice her to be chosen to marry. However, what is often not highlighted in this story is Naomi's advice on how to capture his attention and express interest. This often overlooked part of the story is a direct challenge to many societal norms that force women to wait idly for men to pursue romantic relationships. The book of Ruth itself highlights the importance of women building relationships with one another and honoring each other as important and worthy. Although in the end Ruth waited for Boaz's decision to marry her, she expressed interest when she encountered him. The older woman provided instruction, and the younger woman followed the advice to make herself known. Once she did it was up to the man to take action. When God illuminates a person for pursuit of a marriage relationship, it is best to do so with wise counsel to discern and accountability to make good choices. Ruth decided to serve the God of Israel, positioning herself to work to survive and take care of herself, identify a potential mate, and then act on Naomi's advice to courageously present herself to Boaz. These decisions were so impactful that it allows this once marginalized woman to become an important part of the lineage of Jesus Christ.

### **Application for Activation**

Having the reputation as a noble man or a worthy woman opens the door for God to bless and reward beyond what one can ask or imagine. The church community can be the conduit to cultivate organic covenant relationships worthy of God's stamp of approval by providing safe and accountable spaces to make kingdom-minded connections. This week consider how you make your church community a space where healthy relationships can form and marriages can be encouraged and cultivated. If you have been married for a long time, how can you encourage younger couples? If you are unmarried and desire marriage, how can you seek wise counsel before pursuing marriage? If you are single and part of the community, how can you affirm and support healthy romantic relationships around you?

## Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

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## Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

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## More Light on the Text

### Ruth 3:1–6, 8–12, 16–18

**1 Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?**

Naomi's desire for each of her daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, had long been that they have husbands and a place to rest (1:9). Their kindness was a blessing that Naomi wanted the Lord to repay to them by giving each a husband and a home. Ruth and Naomi traveled to Bethlehem. While in Bethlehem, Ruth gleaned from the crops to feed herself and her mother-in-law. Gleaning is picking up the leftover crops after they have been harvested. Leaving crops for foreigners and the poor is what God declared that the Israelite landowners must do. Gleaning was not a new concept. It is not an act of charity for the Israelite landowners as others practiced. Gleaning is based on God's holiness. The landowners, who are Israelites, are required by God to leave crops for the poor, foreigners, and those living on the margins of life (Leviticus 19:10; Deuteronomy 24:19–22). God's love is not rooted in the desires of others to be kind or not; it is rooted in God's nature and is unconditional. Naomi was determined to find a home for Ruth. While waiting for their new home, Ruth chose to work. She did not sit idly by and wait for someone to feed and care for them. She had asked Naomi if she could glean. Her work meant they would have food to cook and eat.

**2 And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshing floor.**

Ruth had asked in chapter 2 if she could glean wheat after the reapers and had been granted permission (2:2). Boaz was a relative of Elimelech, Naomi's husband, and the owner of the land where Ruth and the other handmaidens picked the grain after it was cut by the reapers. Boaz, whose name means "swiftness," was a man of status and wealth. He was a man of integrity that others listened to and respected. The reapers knew that Ruth was a Moabite. Boaz learned this and more when he spoke directly with Ruth (vv. 8–13). Her kind responses and demeanor caught Boaz's attention. Boaz would remember her kindness.

Ruth shares with Naomi her encounter with Boaz. Naomi believed that the meeting and conversation between Ruth and Boaz was an opportunity to secure a future for Ruth. Naomi's question to Ruth, about Boaz's relation to the family, points to him as the kinsman-redeemer (3:2). The kinsman-redeemer or guardian redeemer (Heb. ga'al, gaw-ALL) is based on laws in the Torah and had the responsibility or honor of intervening on behalf of the family member (i.e., Leviticus 25:25–55; Ruth 3:12–13).

The Scriptures describe Naomi and Ruth as widows. Neither had children who could take care of them. Therefore, Naomi needed redemption of her husband's land because they did not have children or any living male relative. Consequently, Boaz could buy the property as the relative, the kinsman-redeemer, and Naomi and Ruth would not become slaves because of debt owed on the property. Naomi realized here was an opportunity for Ruth to have a home and a husband. Naomi devised a plan for Ruth to establish a covenantal relationship with Boaz that could lead to marriage.

Naomi knew that Ruth would need to speak with Boaz when others were not around. The harvesting process of the barley would allow this. After the barley was harvested, various steps were involved to prepare it to sell. Nighttime was a good cover for Naomi's plan to begin. Her plan was an undercover move to help secure Ruth's future. Would the plan work? Naomi's plan for Boaz and Ruth to marry could happen, if careful planning, explicit details, following directions, and Boaz's unknowing cooperation occurred. Ruth was willing to participate in Naomi's plan. Naomi could not control Boaz's actions, but she could guide Ruth in securing a future for both women. If Ruth and Boaz were married, Ruth would have a home and a husband and become a surrogate mother for Naomi. A child born from the marriage of Ruth and Boaz would be the heir for Naomi to keep her family alive and growing. Also, Boaz, who would purchase the land, would retain the land in trust for the family's probable future heir.

**3 Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. 4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do. 5 And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do. 6 And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.**

Naomi instructed Ruth how to prepare for her upcoming encounter with Boaz (vv. 3–5). Boaz would be sleeping on the threshing floor to protect the crop from robbers. The threshing floors were away from the village where the men lived. Naomi told Ruth to bathe and anoint herself with fragrances that would appeal to Boaz. Ruth's fresh bath, clean dress, and sweet smelling perfume would attract him.

Verse 4 is a very controversial topic. There are two points of debate. Some scholars believe that Naomi's instructions to "uncover" Boaz implied a sexual interpretation in Hebrew because the words uncover (Heb. galah, gaw- LAW), feet (Heb. margelot, mar-guh-LOTE), and lay down (Heb. shakab, shaw-KOV) all have sexual meanings. Other scholars state that the uncovering referred to his limbs, which include legs, thighs, and feet (Daniel 10:6). Ruth waited until Boaz laid down and then went onto the threshing floor and laid near him. This allowed Ruth access to him during the cover of night. Naomi cautioned her to wait until he was finished eating and drinking. Boaz would relax and fall asleep. This would provide Ruth a chance to see where he was sleeping and position herself near Boaz without his knowing that she was present.

Naomi assured Ruth that Boaz would tell her what to do. Ruth would need to follow his instructions. Ruth agreed that she would obey all that Naomi had told her to do, then went to the threshing floor and did it (v. 6).

**8 And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet. 9 And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman. 10 And he said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. 11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. 12 And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.**

The darkness was a shield for both of them. Ruth's presence could become a problem if anyone knew they were together. Boaz's reputation would be tainted and Ruth an outcast or looked down upon (v. 14). The other men

who had been sleeping on the various threshing floors were either already asleep or chose to ignore any sounds or movements that were non-threatening. The threshing floor was also known as a place for men to frequent with prostitutes and drink wine (Hosea 9:1–2).

As Naomi had instructed, Ruth uncovered Boaz by folding back his long tunic. The night air or the feeling of someone's presence may have awakened him. Once he was awake, Ruth would have the opportunity to have a private talk with him. When he awoke, Boaz was startled to see someone was lying near him. The text does not say where she was lying, but it was close enough for him to see someone was near, but too far to fully recognize who. The darkness of the night shielded her. Boaz asked who was there and Ruth answered by stating her name, her status, and asked if he would spread his garment over her because he was their family's closest kinsman-redeemer (vv. 8–9).

Ruth deviated from the plan that Naomi had given her. Ruth decided for whatever reason to state why she was there. In essence, Ruth had requested for Boaz to marry her and take care of any debt that she and Naomi had. This was not a part of Naomi's initial plan. Boaz had not forgotten their earlier conversation. He had inquired who she was before the two ever spoke, and then had the opportunity to expand and deepen the relationship. Ruth's integrity and faithfulness were highly respected by Boaz. She was considered a virtuous woman. Ruth was free to marry the family's kinsman-redeemer. The beginning stages of this relationship could lead to a covenant of marriage.

Marriage is a special and honorable event. Boaz knew marriage was created and ordained by God (Genesis 2:24). The sacredness of marriage is addressed in the New Testament by Jesus after the Pharisees tried to trap him with a question about divorce (Matthew 19:4–9). Jesus emphasized that God created marriage and that unless the wife commits sexual immorality, a man should not divorce his wife. If Boaz agreed to cover Ruth with his garment, he was agreeing to marry her (Ezekiel 16:8). He was willing to accept the responsibility, financial needs, and the sacredness of marriage.

Before Boaz agreed to marry Ruth by spreading the garment over her, he spoke about her character and how well he and others thought of her. Boaz praised Ruth's kindness (Heb. *khesed*, KHEH-sed), referring to the kindness, compassion, faithfulness, loyalty, mercy, and love she had shown (1:8; 2:11, 20). Additionally, Boaz stated that she did not choose the younger men, whether they were rich or the poor, stronger or energetic. This obviously pleased Boaz. Ruth was a woman of integrity. Her character and her discipline demonstrated this.

Ruth must have shown or indicated that she was afraid because Boaz told her not be afraid (v. 11) in her request for him to become the provider, protector, and to marry her. If the kinsman-redeemer who is the closest relative to the family does not marry Ruth, Boaz agreed to honor her request and marry her. The name of this close kinsman-redeemer is not given in the text. Yet, Boaz is aware of whom he is and must speak with him before moving forward with any plans of buying the property or marrying Ruth. Boaz demonstrated his integrity and respect of Ruth because he did not want her reputation ruined, and he respected the family and tradition processes of kinsman-redeemer (vv. 11–14). Although he agreed to marry Ruth, he was willing to abide by the established tradition.

Naomi's return to Bethlehem, and Ruth traveling with her and gleaning in Boaz's field are examples of the Lord's interaction before the relationship began. Their covenantal relationship would unfold as the story continues. The future marriage between Ruth and Boaz is part of the divine and historical lineage that Jesus, the Messiah, would be born into. Ruth and Boaz would have a son named Obed, who was the father of Jesse, and Jesse would become the father of David. David would become one of the greatest kings of Israel. Each of these ancestors are named in the lineage of Jesus (Matthew 1:5–6; Luke 3:31–32).



**16 And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her. 17 And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law. 18 Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.**

It is interesting to note Naomi's initial question, "Who art thou, my daughter?" which in this context would be akin to asking "Are you Mrs. Boaz?" Ruth laid at the feet of Boaz until the early morning as he had asked (v. 14). Before the sun rose, Ruth left and returned home to her mother-in-law. No one else would know that she was in the threshing floor area with Boaz except for her mother-in-law, Naomi. Ruth did not leave empty-handed. Boaz asked her to give him the veil or shawl that covered her head. As she held this piece of fabric, Boaz put a large amount of barley, "six measures," into it (vv. 15, 17). He wanted to make sure that she returned home with a gift for Naomi. The barley was a gift of substance and one both women would use and remember Boaz for his generosity. The amount and the weight of the barley were so great that Boaz had to place it on Ruth's shoulder (v. 15).

First, Ruth showed Naomi the large amount of barley that Boaz gave her as a gift for Naomi. He did want her to return home empty-handed. Secondly, after hearing Boaz's response, Naomi tells Ruth to wait until Boaz completes what he needs to do. Naomi is confident that Boaz will take the necessary actions to solidify the relationship. Naomi believed that he would not stop until he had done so.

The initial meeting of Ruth and Boaz was the beginning steps of a covenantal relationship that would develop into a marriage. Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi were integral parts of God's plan. Although God does not speak in the book of Ruth, His handiwork is evidenced throughout the book of Ruth.

# Daily Bible Readings

## **MONDAY**

God's Chosen Bride  
(Ezekiel 16:8–14)

## **TUESDAY**

Status of Divorced Women in Israel  
(Deuteronomy 24:1–4)

## **WEDNESDAY**

Sustain Marital Love and Fidelity  
(1 Corinthians 7:1–11)

## **THURSDAY**

Husbands and Wives, Joint Heirs  
(1 Peter 3:1–9)

## **FRIDAY**

Boaz Buys Naomi's Property  
(Ruth 4:9–12)

## **SATURDAY**

Ruth and Boaz Marry; Obed Born  
(Ruth 4:13–17)

## **SUNDAY**

Support and Protect Marriage  
(Ruth 3:1–6, 8–12, 16–18)