

**Pray:** To begin with, pray. Ask God to teach you of Himself from his word.

**Background:** We come to the end of the book of Ruth. Agreeing to and following Naomi's plan, in faith, Ruth has proposed to Boaz during the night on the threshing floor at the feet of Boaz by asking him to "spread the corner of his garment over her for he is a guardian redeemer of their family". She is hoping he would come to their aid in need, provide for them and produce with Ruth a son who would carry on the name of Elimelek and Mohlon. Boaz praises Ruth again for her faithfulness to Naomi and ultimately to God. But there is another closer relative that must first have the opportunity to do so. If he refuses Boaz has agreed to do so. As proof of his willingness to Naomi and of a faithful Godly man he forwards more food to Naomi that she might know that she has not been left "empty-handed" as she once thought (1:20,21; 3:17). Ruth has returned home. They must now wait to see what happens. God has provided up to now, will he continue to do so. It's the next day and Boaz has gone to the city gate to meet the closer relative.

**Read the passage:** Ruth Chapter 4 verses 1 to 22.

**Questions:**

1. Read verse 1. What tells you that this encounter was no coincidence but that God was in its unfolding?
2. We are not told why Naomi has to sell some land or how Boaz came to know this. It could have been confiscated whilst in Moab as in the story of the woman and her land in 2 Kings 8:1-6. But read Numbers 27:8-11; Deuteronomy 25:5 and 6 and Leviticus 25:47-49. In order to keep the land "in the family" in this case Elimelek's family, who could redeem it and how?
3. A possible reason why at first the next of kin was eager to redeem the land then change his mind was that he thought the land was Elimelek's Naomi's dead husband's land (Which it was but had fallen to his son Mahon who is now dead). He knows Naomi was beyond bearing children and the land would eventually fall to him. But when he realised the land

belonged to Mahon and that Ruth could have children that would inherit it he declines. What reason does he give? What do you think he means? (See verse 6 to 8) What does this tell you about the man?

4. What does Boaz choose to do? (See verses 9 and 10) In order to choose to do that it must have been in his power to do so. Was this a costly thing for Boaz to do?

Why do you think such agreements needed witnesses and public? Do we have similar arrangements today?

5. What are the witnesses praying for in verses 11 and 12?
6. Again, what do we read in verse 13 that gives you confidence that God is sovereign and providing for His people?
7. What do the woman say to Naomi in verses 14 and 15 about Boaz and Obed? Why speak of Obed in the same way as of Boaz?

What do they remind Naomi about Ruth? Why would they say that? (Think back to the beginning of the book)

8. Once more, what do we read in verses 16 to 22 that gives you confidence that God is sovereign, and provides for his people? (Clue: Who descends from Obed? See also Matthew 1:1-16)
9. Jesus Christ, God's Son, is your redeemer and mine. What do we learn about this from passages like Mark 10:45; Luke 1:68; Galatians 3:13,14 and 1 Peter 1:17 to 21.
10. The book of Ruth could well have been called the book of Naomi or the book of Boaz. What do we learn about each that we could take on board and apply to ourselves? (Consider in your answer also Judges 21 verse 25)
11. Finally, share with your group what you've learnt about God, faith and hope from the book of Ruth?

**Conclude with prayer:**