

TODAY's SCRIPTURE: RUTH CHAPTER 3 (selected verse below)

3 One day Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi said to her, "My daughter, I must find a home for you, where you will be well provided for. **2** Now Boaz, with whose women you have worked, is a relative of ours. Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. **3** Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don't let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. **4** When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do."

5 "I will do whatever you say," Ruth answered. **6** So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.

7 When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down. **8** In the middle of the night something startled the man; he turned—and there was a woman lying at his feet!

9 "Who are you?" he asked.

"I am your servant Ruth," she said. "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family."

10 "The LORD bless you, my daughter," he replied. "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. **11** And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS FOR SMALL GROUPS, FRIEND GROUPS & HOUSEHOLDS:

1. **Read Ruth chapter 3 out loud together.** What stands out to you in these verses? What questions do they raise? Feel free to wrestle with your questions together.
2. How do you feel as Naomi is sharing her plan with Ruth, and the scene at the threshing floor at night unfolds?
3. Is it easy or hard to ask someone to make a sacrifice for you? What can we learn from Ruth about how to do this without resorting to the usual tactics of guilt, shame and manipulation?
4. Do you think this kind of romance (one that is not driven by sexual attraction) is becoming an endangered species in our culture? Why or why not?
5. Ruth asks Boaz to be like Yahweh (God) to her. Do we have the right to ask this of each other? Explain.