

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Ruth 3:1

One day Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not try to find a home for you, where you will be well provided for?"

If you have time, read Ruth 3.

As we've seen throughout Naomi and Ruth's story, God very much gives us joy. However, that joy is not always the easiest thing to find. Sometimes we need to change our perspective to see it. Sometimes, working into God's joy may increase our awareness of it. Sometimes, an unforeseen spark leads to joy in a way we never would have predicted. Such is the case in the third chapter of Ruth.

Naomi wants to make sure Ruth is provided for. Ruth has been faithful to her, and she wants Ruth to know God's richest blessing in Bethlehem. So she tells Ruth to wash up, put on her best clothes and perfume, wait until Boaz goes to sleep, and then uncover his feet. I will be fully transparent here- Naomi's suggestion seems wise to me, up until the uncovering of Boaz's feet part. According to my NIV Study Bible, though, this is Ruth basically asking Boaz to marry her. This is a very vulnerable woman- a widow, an immigrant- appealing to Boaz to be her kinsman-redeemer, to essentially save Naomi's family from disappearing.

The turnaround from the beginning of Ruth and Naomi's story is startling. Naomi originally told Ruth to return to her family and find someone else to marry in Moab. Naomi thought joy was beyond her, but wanted Ruth to find it again. But Ruth, in a complete act of selflessness, stayed by Naomi's side. At the time, this did not seem like the path of joy. It seemed like a path of pain and difficulty. Ruth chose it anyway because she loved Naomi and refused to abandon her. At this point in their story, Ruth and Naomi have had glimpses of God's joy, but in asking Boaz to be their kinsman-redeemer, they are swinging for the fences. They are anticipating a greater joy in the Lord than they could have dreamed of at their lowest point.

When God gives us his joy, it inspires hope. It leads to more joy. That doesn't mean we will never suffer again. But each time his joy swings back around, our roots in him are deepened, our joy is deepened, and it becomes less and less dependent on current circumstances. Remember times of God's great faithfulness today; allow your joy to be deepened.