

Ruth 2:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.

Analysis

Naomi's response reveals God's providence: **'Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead'**. This blessing references God's chesed (covenant loyalty) continuing toward both living (Ruth and Naomi) and dead (Elimelech, Mahlon, Chilion) through raising up a kinsman-redeemer. Naomi explains: **'The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen'**. The term go'el (גֹּאֵל, redeemer) appears, indicating Boaz can redeem Elimelech's property and potentially marry Ruth to preserve the family line. Naomi's bitter despair (1:20-21) begins transforming to hope as she recognizes God's redemptive purposes.

Historical Context

The kinsman-redeemer (go'el) concept combined family loyalty with legal responsibility to preserve family property and lineage. Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 25 established these laws. Naomi's recognition that Boaz is go'el means he has both right and responsibility to help. Her joy demonstrates faith reviving—God hasn't abandoned them but is orchestrating redemption. The reference to God's kindness toward the dead means preserving their name and inheritance through the kinsman-redeemer system.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the kinsman-redeemer concept foreshadow Christ's redemption of believers who cannot redeem themselves?
2. What does Naomi's recognition of providence teach about seeing God's faithfulness even after seasons of despair?

Interlinear Text

הוא	בָּרַךְ וַיְבָרֶכֶת	לְכַלֵּתָהּ	נָעֻמִּי	וַתֹּאמֶר
H1931	Blessed	H3618	And Naomi	said
	H1288		H5281	H559
אֶת	חֲסֶד־וְ	עַל־ב	לֹא	אֲשֶׁר
H854	his kindness	H5800	H3808	H834
	H2617			be he of the LORD
				H3068
קָרֹב	נָעֻמִּי	לָהּ	וַתֹּאמֶר	הַחַיִּים
H7138	And Naomi	H0	H559	H2416
	H5281			to the living
				H854
				and to the dead
				H4191
הוא:	מִגֵּאֲלֵנוּ	הָאִישׁ	לְנוּ	
H1931	unto us one of our next kinsmen	H1350	unto her The man	H376
			H0	

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 2:5 (Blessing): And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of the LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him.

Proverbs 17:17 (Parallel theme): A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

Leviticus 25:25 (Parallel theme): If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.

Job 19:25 (Parallel theme): For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

Ruth 4:14 (Blessing): And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

Ruth 4:6 (Parallel theme): And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.

2 Samuel 9:1 (Parallel theme): And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

Philippians 4:10 (References Lord): But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.