

Ruth 4:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's:

Analysis

The proposition: '**And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's**'. Boaz reveals that Naomi has property rights to Elimelech's land, which she's selling (likely due to poverty necessitating liquidation). The phrase 'our brother Elimelech' emphasizes family connection and redemption responsibility. Boaz presents this first without mentioning Ruth, testing whether the kinsman will fulfill redemption duty for property alone. This strategic presentation shows wisdom in negotiations—presenting information sequentially to reveal true motivations.

Historical Context

Israelite inheritance law (Leviticus 25) forbade permanent land sales outside families. When poverty forced selling, nearest relatives had first rights and responsibility to redeem (buy back) property, keeping it within clan. Naomi's selling of Elimelech's land created redemption obligation. The land had likely been worked by others during her decade in Moab and her subsequent return. Its sale would provide resources for survival but meant losing family inheritance. The kinsman-redeemer law protected vulnerable family members while preserving tribal land allotments God had originally assigned.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does the kinsman-redeemer law teach about God's design for family and community responsibility toward vulnerable members?
2. How does property redemption illustrate Christ's redemption of our lost inheritance through sin?

Interlinear Text

אָשֶׁר מִשְׁדֵּךְ הַחֲלֵקָת לְגַאֲלֵי אָמֵר
And he said unto the kinsman a parcel of land H834
H559 H1350 H2513 H7704

הַשְׁבָּה נָעָם מִכְּבָה לְאֶלְיָם לְרַאֲמִן יָנָן
which was our brother Elimelech's selleth Naomi that is come again H7725
H251 H458 H4376 H5281

מִזְאָבָה מִשְׁדֵּךְ הַ
of land of Moab
H7704 H4124

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