

Where's Your Chair?

Ruth 3 10-18



Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.
Unless the Lord keeps the city, the guard keeps watch in vain.
Psalm 127:1-2

Praising:

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy,
be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Reading:

Ruth 3:10-18
Ruth and Boaz meet at the threshing floor

Boaz asks God to bless Ruth because she is looking for a husband in accordance with Israelite custom. On Boaz's side, the next-of-kin has an obligation to protect the honour and property of the family (Leviticus 25). However there is another tradition Boaz wants to honour: a surviving brother is required to

marry his deceased brother's wife (Deuteronomy 25). Although Boaz is not Ruth's late husband's brother, he is close family and so deems it fit to follow the same social convention. But he informs Ruth that there is another male relative with a prior claim. Until this claim is determined, Ruth will need to leave the threshing floor before anyone else recognises she has been there. Nothing is signed and sealed yet, although Naomi accepts the gift of barley as a token of Boaz's single-minded intention.

Listening:

Praying:

Lord grant us patience

- when old fashioned proprieties put the brakes on our excitement and enthusiasm
- when we want events to move at our pace and on our terms rather than yours
- when you take time to teach us, to prepare us and to bring us to trust in your sovereignty

Father: looking back now, I see the value in waiting, the wisdom in holding back. For your plan is better than mine; your purpose is higher than mine; and your timing is always perfect. Amen

Doing:

Monday, 14 March 2016