

“In Covenant. . .”

We are offering a series of reflections for individuals and churches who may be finding it difficult to provide midweek prayer and shared learning from Scripture. You can use these by watching the YouTube video, reading the relevant Bible passage and then reflecting on the questions below. To help make this a shared activity, you are encouraged to reflect on this together with friends using an online conference package, or simply arrange with a friend for them to watch it too. Then ring each other up, share what your thoughts and responses and then pray for one another, and pray together for our world.

Read Ruth 1:14-18

Watch the YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/Uglvo9PA0BI>

Now spend some time reflecting on the covenant that Ruth makes with Naomi and Naomi's God. Use the key phrases in this to reflect on your own covenant relationship with God:

Your people will be my people and your God will be my God. Reflect on what it means for you to be included in God's people. Don't allow your familiarity with this term to let you take it for granted. Think about some of those familiar phrases that you find in Scripture that describe God's people – let yourself remember these and dwell on what they mean for you. Think of those you identify with who are also God's people – pray for them and thank God for them. Let yourself be reminded that at the heart of this is your relationship with God. Let the phrase “You are my God” turn over in your mind and speak to you.

Where you go, I will go – where you stay, I will stay. What matters is being in God's place and following in God's way – irrespective of whether that means adversity or success. Use these words to re-ground your own journey in God. Don't belittle or brush aside your struggles - put them into perspective. Allow yourself to re-discover that what matters more is to be in the place that God wants us to be; follow in the pathways that God ordains and recognise God's covenant promise that our eternal future is safe in God's hands.

Where you die, I will die and there I will be buried. In recent days we have all had to confront our mortality, but don't see these as words of morbidity. These are a commitment for life – take time to re-affirm your own life commitment to God. Recognise too the confidence that lies behind this statement – our trust is in God whose promise extends beyond life itself. Reclaim your confidence in eternity – be reminded that your future is secure in God.

PRAYER

Faithful God – though I live in a world that surrounds me with uncertainty, and the pathways we walk may be laced with difficulty and challenge – we journey as your people; we journey with your people, and we journey as followers of you. Thank you that in Jesus, you have drawn us into an eternal covenant of love, forgiveness, salvation and hope. Help each of us to root ourselves in you and to be defined not by the circumstances that we face, but the God in whom we belong. Guide our pathways, help us to discover your constant presence; hold us firm in your love and remind us of that eternal hope that is your gift of grace and sacrifice. AMEN