

Reaching Out in Real Faith

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Preacher: Philip Copeland

[0 : 0 0] Well, let's turn to our Bibles, shall we? And we're going to read together in the Old Testament in the book of Ruth. And I think you will find that, yes, on page 223, if you have one of the Red Church Bibles.

We've been looking together at this wonderful little story in the Old Testament that plays such an important part in linking the godless days, the early days of the judges with the coming at last of the great king, King David himself.

And the story began with a very ordinary family from Israel, from the little town of Bethlehem, going off into a foreign land, into the land of Moab because of a famine in the land.

But instead of finding joy and salvation and life, being touched by the tragedy of death, a man and his two sons both died, leaving a widow and two widowed daughters-in-law.

Then the extraordinary story of the mother-in-law, Naomi, coming back and finding God's hand of blessing had come again onto his land and onto his people, coming to Bethlehem, the house of bread, and finding bread was really there.

[1 : 2 0] A harvest was come. And her faithful daughter-in-law, Ruth, finding great kindness in the fields of a man called Boaz, who turns out to be a relative, a distant relative of the family, and therefore a man with responsibilities to help them and to be their redeemer.

So chapter 3 then begins this way. Then Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, said to her, My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you?

Is not Boaz our relative with whose young woman you were? See, he's winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. Wash therefore, and anoint yourself, and put on your cloak, and go down to the threshing floor.

But do not make yourself known to the man until he's finished eating and drinking. But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he'll tell you what to do.

And she replied, All that you say I will do. So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had commanded her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain.

[2 : 4 0] Then she came softly, and covered his feet and lay down. At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet. He said, Who are you?

And she answered, I'm Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer. And he said, May you be blessed by the law of my daughter.

You have made this last kindness greater than the first, in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask.

For all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. And now it is true that I am a redeemer, yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. I remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good, let him do it.

But if he is not willing to redeem you, then as the Lord lives, I will redeem you. Lie down till the morning. So she laid his feet until morning, but arose before one could recognize another.

[3 : 44] And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came to the threshing floor. He said, Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out. So she held it out, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her.

And then she came into the city. And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, How did you fare, my daughter? And then she told her all that the man had done for her, saying, These six measures of barley he gave to me.

For he said to me, You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law. She replied, Wait, my daughter-in-law, until you learn how the matter turns out. For the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today.

Amen. And may God bless his word. Well, please do have your Bibles open to Ruth chapter 3, page 223 of our church Bibles.

Ruth 3, which is really all about reaching out in real faith. Last week in chapter 2, we saw that when Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, returned to the kingdom, by God's providence, they found a redeemer called Boaz.

[5 : 16] And as we went through chapter 2 together, we were utterly astonished by the kindness that Boaz showered upon them. In Ruth 2, the Lord starts to, if you like, mediate his loving kindness to these two widows through his redeemer.

And as Boaz gave them a share of the first fruits of his harvest, Ruth and Naomi, who were empty, start to experience fullness and hope.

But as we saw in the very last sentence of chapter 2, verse 23, we haven't reached the happy ending that we are looking for. Things are looking up for these two widows, but they're still two widows living together without a man.

And back then, that meant that they were as good as dead. They were destitute. And so as we left chapter 2, knowing that all this had happened, we also knew that something else needs to happen.

It's very well to meet a man of standing, a redeemer who protects and provides during the harvest time. But that in and of itself isn't enough. It may be kind, but it isn't a lasting solution.

[6 : 28] And so in chapter 3, we will find out what Ruth and Naomi do in order to bring about a lasting solution. And before we get into the narrative, I want us just to zoom out a second and just observe that chapter 2 of Ruth and chapter 3, they follow very similar structures.

Let me just run you through this. Both chapters follow this structure. Both begin with Naomi and Ruth alone together. They then agree that Ruth shall go somewhere, and she goes.

Then in both chapters, Boaz asks Ruth, Who are you? Or who is this? And he's told. Then in both chapters, Boaz asks Ruth to stay and declares that she is worthy of blessing.

Then Ruth returns to Naomi with some sort of a blessing from Boaz. Then Ruth tells Naomi about everything that's happened, and both chapters finish with Naomi giving Ruth advice.

You see that? Absolutely copy of each other, structurally. They're very similar, but there are a couple of differences. And it is vitally important that we notice the differences between the two chapters, because the distinctive message of Ruth 3 will be found in the ways in which it differs from Ruth 2.

[7 : 49] So here's the two main differences. Two main differences. Firstly, you remember, those of you who were here last week, that the primary subject of Ruth 2 is indicated in chapter 2, verse 1, by the narrator.

Remember, he gives us this little comment to the readers to keep an eye on Boaz. This chapter is all about Boaz. He's the central focus. His provision is protection.

Chapter 2 is all about him. In chapter 3, however, the drama begins with the initiative of Naomi and the obedience of Ruth. There's no mention of Boaz.

And so the focus on chapter 3, then, is on the women, is on Ruth and Naomi, as they reach out both in faith to their Redeemer. The second difference between Ruth 2 and 3 is that chapter 2, you remember, it takes place in the open.

It's public. It's in the daylight. It's in front of everyone. But chapter 3 is emphatically in darkness at night. Everything speaks of privacy and intimacy.

[8 : 57] Things happen in the darkness and much other people don't know what's happening. The author wants us to see that Ruth 3 is really all about a one-on-one personal and intimate encounter between a woman, one woman, and the one Redeemer.

As we walk through this intimate scene together, I really want us to notice five aspects of what real biblical faith looks like. It's so important that we notice these five aspects of real faith that are displayed in Naomi and Ruth because there are five aspects today of what faith in Christ means.

If you ever ask yourself, what does it mean for me to have faith in Christ? What does that look like? Well, simply look at this chapter. These five aspects of faith were true back then and they're true of faith today.

So at the start of chapter 3, we've reached the end of harvest time. Naomi comes to Ruth and says, verse 1, My daughter, should I not seek rest for you that it may be well with you?

And what Naomi is doing here is really coming back to what she had originally wished for Ruth back in chapter 1 verse 9. Do you remember? When she prayed that the Lord grant that you, Ruth, may find rest in the house of another husband.

[10 : 23] And that's what Naomi's picking up on here. So yes, it is good for Ruth to stay close to Boaz's harvesting team, but Naomi seeks for Ruth a deeper goodness, the goodness of a husband and a home.

The gleanings are wonderful, but Naomi wants Ruth to receive blessings that are far greater. And we shall see that at the same time, Ruth's goal is actually to bring into the world an heir for Naomi to continue her dead husband's line and name.

You see, each woman cares about each other and each woman has the goal of bringing great care to the other women. And the method that these women use is a vivid expression of covenant faith as we shall see.

So, verse 2, Naomi outlines her plan and it is very daring. It's very daring and extraordinary, in fact. She says, Is not Boaz our relative with whose young woman you were?

See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. Now, threshing floor is, just think about this, it is a place where the wonderful potential of harvest begins to be realized.

[11 : 38] It's the place where the grain is thrashed out. It turns piles of stocks into mounds of life-giving grain. That's the setting of this chapter and as we read that we're supposed to feel in our hearts the excitement of great future potential.

Something's coming here. So, Naomi goes on, verse 3, with her plan. Wash, therefore, anoint yourself, put on your cloak, and go down to the threshing room floor.

Although, we have seen and we shall see that the love story of this book is not a romance between Ruth and Boaz, nevertheless, we cannot avoid the atmosphere in this chapter of sexual possibilities.

It's everywhere in this chapter. Let's just look at the preparation here that Ruth is to go through. She's to wash the dirt of the day off of herself so that she'll go to the threshing room floor pure.

She's to put on perfume, anoint herself, possibly with myrrh. It's the same word here that's used in Song of Songs when describing the anointing of the male lover with perfume.

[12 : 48] It's an erotic gesture. But let's just be clear on this. Ruth is not going to seduce Boaz into improper sexual intimacy.

As we shall see, rather she's going to him dressed as a bride would dress. As a bride would dress. Friends, we must be totally clear on this.

There is no sexual immorality in this chapter. But there are strong hints of a future intimacy that's yet to come. The atmosphere is of sexual possibilities.

And as we go through, you'll see this atmosphere being boosted up in four ways. Let me just rattle them off quickly. First, as I said, Ruth will go dressed and perfumed as a bride.

Secondly, she's going to uncover Boaz's lower legs. In other words, I take it that means she's going to undo his outer garment. Whoa. Thirdly, she pleads with him to cover her with the wings of this outer garment.

[13 : 53] Wrap them around me. And fourth detail is the fact that the verb to lie down is used eight times in this chapter. There's a lot of lying down in this chapter.

Which is precisely what a responsible parent would tell their teenager who's going out on a date not to do. Whatever you do on this date, don't lie down. Don't lie down together because lying down leads to, well, we know what lying down leads to.

So whilst there's no sexual immorality here, there is an atmosphere of sexual possibilities. Hints of an intimacy that's yet to come. And let me just remind you that having said all that, remember there is nothing in the story that suggests there is what we might think of as chemistry between Ruth and Boaz.

We may love to think there was, that they fancied each other, but there's nothing in the story to tell us that was the case. Maybe they did, but maybe they didn't. We're not told, so it doesn't matter.

So let's not read that into the text just because we like a good rom-com. So back to Ruth 3, verse 3. Naomi continues to outline her plan.

[15 : 05] It says to Ruth, go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself known to the man until he's finished eating and drinking. But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies, then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he will tell you what to do.

And replied, all that you say I will do. And here's the first aspect of faith that we see displayed here. is this, faith is intentional.

Faith is intentional. That's what we see in this scene here. Faith is intentional. We sometimes think of faith as being a merely passive thing, something that would just happen in us.

But there's something about faith that is an active and a deliberate reaching out. And that is what Ruth and Naomi are doing here by taking initiative. It's not wrong what they're doing.

It's absolutely right. They're reaching out in faith. Friends, if you were to read the Bible carefully, you will discover that faith ultimately is a gift from God.

[16 : 11] It's not something we can decide autonomously to exercise. Nobody reaches out to trust in Jesus Christ unless God has given them faith. But nonetheless, faith in its nature, it is an initiative.

It's an intentional and a deliberate thing that we really and actually exercise. A man or a woman decides to exercise faith to reach out to Christ the Redeemer, both at the start of the Christian life and every day of the Christian life as well.

So that's the first aspect of faith that we see here. It's intentional. It takes action in reaching out to the Redeemer. And let me just give you, before we launch back into the story, the second aspect of real faith that we see here is this.

real faith is vulnerable. Let me tell you what I mean by that. Real faith abandons all other securities. What we're going to see Ruth doing here is a very, very risky thing.

Just think about it. Ruth, an unaccompanied young Moabite widow, a foreigner with no rights and no man to protect her, is going out in the dark to a harvest threshing floor full of relaxed and off-duty men.

[17 : 27] men who've probably had a few drinks. Now, in most places during the days of the judges, which is when this book is set, such action would be to lay yourself open to all sorts of drunken abuse.

You see, in doing what Naomi says, Ruth is abandoning all the vestiges of safety that she might have held on to. She is going to entrust herself to one Redeemer. She believes that he will protect her and treat her right and she has no other hope at all.

What she's doing here is very, very vulnerable. But that's what real faith is like. Please look at verse 6. So she went out to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had commanded her.

And when Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Now, the phrase his heart was merry is used elsewhere in scripture and it really covers a whole spectrum of different meanings.

On the one extreme, it can mean that someone was totally hammered, that they're drunk, total drunkenness. But at the other end of the spectrum, it can mean cheerful exuberance on the other extreme.

[18 : 42] And knowing Boaz's character from the context from the rest of the book, I think it's most likely that the latter is in view. Boaz was not a drunk, but he was a worthy man of great standing who cared about covenantal faithfulness and God's law.

He's a man who wouldn't allow women to come down to his threshing room floor because he didn't want any sexual immorality to take place. So it's most likely that he went to bed, not drunk off his face, but his heart was full of gladness and joy because the harvest was over and there was much to celebrate.

He's relaxed, cheerful, no doubt sleepy after a fruitful evening's work, a good meal and a couple of drinks. But he has no idea as he lies down what is about to happen.

Just notice Boaz, he goes to the far end of the grain pile. Again, he is away from others. He is in the dark. This is private. So verse 7, Ruth then makes her approach softly, quietly.

Again, note the intimacy, the privacy, the secrecy. She undoes his outer garment, she uncovers his lower legs as she lays down and draws near to him.

[19 : 57] Ruth is utterly vulnerable now. And again, most powerful men in the days of the judges might have taken advantage of a young woman who was foolish enough to do what Ruth has just done.

And they would not be held to account for what they did. But you know, Ruth has faith in the character of this man, this redeemer. She trusts that he will not abuse her in her vulnerability, her foreignness, her decision to lie beside him under his clothing in the darkness.

And this brings us on to the third aspect of faith. Faith is intimate. Faith is intimate. What happens now happens between two individuals, one believing more about women and one trustworthy redeemer.

No one else sees, no one else comes into the scene, no one else knows, no one else witnesses, no one interferes or intervenes. Here is one young woman and one senior man in the darkness and the privacy of the night.

And in this intimacy, we see something of the deeply personal and individual nature of real faith. Friends, and you'll know this if you know your Bible, there is a corporate aspect of faith.

[21 : 10] For example, to exercise faith is to transfer from one community to another. Just think of what is said in Acts chapter 2 verse 40. It describes exercising faith as leaving this corrupt generation to join the church.

But friends, nevertheless, each man or woman exercises faith alone. Each of us needs to enter one by one through the narrow gate. You and I cannot have faith credited to us on the coattails of our parents or friends in some sort of second-hand way.

Faith must be, as individual and as personal as this meeting between Boaz and Ruth. So verse 8, in the darkness, Boaz finally discovers a woman beside him.

He gets the fright of his life. And verse 9, he asks, who are you? And she answers, I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer.

Now, just please notice what this verse doesn't say. This verse doesn't say, Ruth, smoldering with longing, looked intently into Boaz's eyes, and the chemistry between them was intense and almost unbearable, as Ruth invites Boaz to be her husband.

[22 : 31] That's nonsense. Read the text. Ruth asks Boaz to make her his wife, not on the grounds of any supposed attraction, but simply because he is a redeemer.

He is a redeemer. And notice the phrase that Ruth uses. Look at it again, spread your wings over your servant. We noticed this last week, it was a phrase used in chapter 2, verse 12, where Boaz acknowledged that Ruth had in faith, come under the wings or the corners of the Lord's garment, his jacket for refuge.

In Ezekiel 16, the same phrase here is used as a metaphor. to describe the Lord marrying his people. Now here in Ruth 3, Ruth is asking Boaz to be the flesh and blood incarnation of the redemption that she seeks from the covenant Lord.

She's asking Boaz, marry me, so that I will have an heir, I will have a child, and I can raise up that son to be an heir in the line of Elimelech on behalf of Naomi, on behalf of Malon, and Chilean, Naomi's dead sons.

See, this plea, in fact, I think it's the book, it's the most direct and daring expression of faith. Ruth, if you like, is calling in the covenant promises and asking Boaz to honor them, not just by generous gleanings, but by marriage.

[24 : 02] And by the way, I take it that's why Ruth uncovered his lower legs. I take it that's what it meant. She opened up his jacket so those wings would be open so that he would symbolically take the wings, his wings, and wrap them around her as assurance that he is going to do what she asks of him.

So Ruth does not appeal to Boaz on the grounds of her attractiveness. No. She appeals to the Redeemer on the grounds of covenant obligation. She's saying, Boaz, I'm asking this of you since you're our Redeemer.

I want you to be who you're covenantally obliged to be. And that, friends, is the fourth aspect of real faith that we see in this drama. Faith is grounded on covenant promises.

Faith is not a subjective personal quality or a capacity that some people just have and others don't. No. Faith is rather a conscious decision to trust what God has promised.

That's what faith is. Ruth does not rest her hope upon her own attractiveness or some possible sexual chemistry between her and Boaz. Her faith is not based upon feelings.

[25 : 13] No. Ruth grounds her appeal on covenant promises. By virtue of being a Redeemer of Naomi's family through being a relative of Elimelech, Boaz had a covenant obligation to raise up offspring for Elimelech.

And that's what Ruth is doing here. And friends, in the same way, faith today goes to Jesus Christ and calls in the promises to which God the Father has committed himself to in Christ.

It is to say, this is what real faith is, is to go to Jesus and to say, Lord Jesus, you've promised to be a Redeemer to me. Now be what you said you'll be. Be what you've promised. That is real faith.

It's grounded in covenant promises. And well, how does Boaz respond to Ruth's request? Please look at verse 10. He says to Ruth, may you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter.

You have made this kindness greater than the first and that you've not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. Can I just hold my hands up here and say, for years, I've totally misread this.

[26 : 22] I've got this so wrong. For years, I've thought what Boaz is saying here is this. Oh, Ruth, thank you for showing such kindness to me and asking me to marry you.

You could have married much younger and more attractive looking men in Bethlehem, but instead you've been so kind and had such pity on me, a lonely old man. Thank you so much for saving me from heartache.

But that is not what Boaz is saying here. That is to misunderstand the direction of the kindness. What Boaz is really saying here is, Ruth, in asking me to marry you, you are being so kind to Naomi.

In fact, this kindness is even greater than the first kindness you showed Naomi when you returned with her from the land of Moab and came to Bethlehem. You have turned down the advances of other younger men from Bethlehem, for none of these younger men are redeemers of Naomi.

Naomi. If you married one of them, these younger men in Bethlehem, then Naomi, her family line, her name, her inheritance would still be in peril.

[27 : 33] But you've not done that. You've come to me this evening and asked me to marry you so that I will redeem your mother in law. I will save her family name and her inheritance.

You are showing Naomi great love, great hesed, great steadfast covenant love. Ruth is basically offering herself up to Boaz as a surrogate for Naomi.

Ruth is willing to conceive, give birth to what will be in some ways, Naomi's child. Remember the love story of this book is not a romance between Ruth and Boaz, but a story of steadfast covenant love between Ruth and Naomi and indeed between Ruth and Naomi and the God of Israel.

So verse 11, Boaz says, look what he says, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. And that is precisely what Ruth needs to hear.

And that brings me to the fifth aspect of what real faith is like here. The fifth aspect of faith is this, faith is effective. When faith is grounded upon covenant promises and calls the redeemer to act upon those covenant promises, it is always effective.

[28 : 51] The redeemer will accept the claims of such faith. And Boaz is a trustworthy redeemer. When called upon to do this intimate and life-changing action, he doesn't hesitate at all.

Friends, let's be clear on this. Just remember what we've said, although faith is a gift from God and it's something that's really exercised by us and it's something that's grounded on covenant promises, when we exercise that faith, God will always respond.

It's always effective. And Jesus Christ, our redeemer, hesitates no more than Boaz did. When we call upon him to fulfill his covenant promises, he will always perform.

The words, don't be afraid, I will do for you what you ask, come more definitely and immediately still from Christ's lips. Just think of that leper. Remember the leper, Mark chapter 1?

He comes up to Jesus in desperate plight and he says, Lord Jesus, if you're willing, what does Jesus reply immediately? I am willing. Real faith that's grounded on covenant promises, it's always effective.

[30 : 00] And so as we read of this worthy man and this worthy woman lying there in the dark of the threshing floor, we breathe a sigh of relief. We think, oh, brilliant. But as is usual with the book of Ruth, tension immediately returns with a new twist, a complication.

Please look at verse 12. Boaz says, and now it is true that I am a redeemer, yet there is a redeemer nearer than I.

So although Boaz is a redeemer of the family, there is another who is more closely related to Naomi. We don't know precisely what the customs were back then that governed the lever at marriage the brother-in-law marriage in those days, but it seems that more than one wider family member might have some covenant obligation to raise up an heir for a widow.

Presumably the closest relative was first in line. And that was actually hinted back in chapter 2 verse 20 when Naomi said Boaz is one of our redeemers.

Now here we're told about another one. And so the tension mounts again. We've met Boaz and seen his kindness, his generosity, his protection. We naturally trust and hope that he will be the redeemer who actually redeems.

[31 : 22] But perhaps he can't. So verse 13, Boaz tells Ruth to stay with him for the night for our own protection. Remember, it's the days of the judges. Anything could happen to her if she was to walk home in the dark.

So verse 14, Ruth stays with him until early morning. And in verses 15 to 16, notice the same pattern that we saw in chapter 2 verse 18.

Ruth, having been with Boaz, goes back to Naomi with something good for her. Something that will bring her some sort of a fullness. And this time it's another helping of grain.

We shall see the pattern repeated once more at the end of chapter 4. Verses 16 and 17, Ruth reports all of the night's events to her mother-in-law. And verse 18, Naomi replies as this, wait my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out.

For the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today. So Ruth needs to wait, and we also need to wait until we come to chapter 4.

[32 : 29] Come back next Sunday night and hear what happens. So friends, that's Ruth 3. And it should be painfully obvious to everyone in this building now that this chapter has absolutely nothing to teach young women and young men about dating.

Yes, it should be perfectly obvious. The Bible does not commend young women to follow Ruth's example here unless they are A, transported back in time to ancient Israel, B, destitute, C, having a destitute Israelite mother-in-law, sorry, I've got my, what letter are we on?

We're on D. Live in a society where a relative of your mother-in-law might be expected to marry you, to raise up a son, to carry on your mother-in-law's family line in the promised land. In the absence of these factors, young Christian women ought to learn purity and wisdom in dating from other parts of the Bible.

Yes, Ruth 3 is not a dating manual. It's got nothing to teach us about that at all. It's about faith. It's about real faith. And the main thrust of the chapter is this, that a daring and intentional exercise of faith, calling on God to act upon his covenant promises, such a faith as that will never be disappointed.

The faith that Naomi and Ruth exercise ought to be the same faith that we exercise and keep on exercising each day of our Christian lives.

[33 : 53] So let me just recap these five aspects of faith before we pray. Firstly, faith is intentional. It's not something that just happens. It's not a passive thing, but a deliberate reaching out to the Redeemer.

Two, faith is vulnerable. Just as Ruth abandoned all the other means of protection and entrusted herself with great courage to Boaz, so for us, faith means coming to the Lord Jesus and abandoning all other sources of security.

Thirdly, faith is intimate. it's deeply personal. Every individual must personally entrust him or herself to the Redeemer.

Fourthly, faith is grounded in covenant promises. Having real faith means that you're a person who calls upon God to keep the promises he's made in Jesus Christ. Just think about when you take the Lord's Supper, for example.

That's just one of the things that we're doing when we take the Lord's Supper, isn't it? When we take the Lord's Supper, we're really calling God the Father to remember the covenant promises that he's sealed by the blood of his precious Son.

[35 : 06] Because real faith is grounded on covenant promises, not on our feelings. Fifthly, faith is effective. That is to say, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, always responds to covenant faith with the assurance that he will do what he has promised.

Well, those are five aspects of real faith seen in Ruth 3. May the Lord help us as we seek to exercise such a faith as this. Well, let's be quiet for a moment and bow our heads, close our eyes, take some time to respond to God's word in your own heart, and then I'll pray for it.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Our dear heavenly father, we praise you that we have a redeemer whom we can look to for refuge, provision, and protection.

A redeemer who's quick to say to all those who call on him to keep his promises, don't be afraid. I will do what you ask. I am willing.

[36 : 22] Father, thank you for the Lord Jesus, and thank you that your word teaches so clearly and vividly what it means for us to have faith in him. Please help us to be a people who are intentionally reaching out to Christ every day, abandoning our trust in other things to instead cast ourselves upon him alone.

We thank you that all those who are under the shadow of his wing are safe and secure. We trust in him and we pray this in his great name. Amen.

Amen.