

On the surface, the story of Ruth can seem slightly ordinary compared to other parts of the Bible. And yet it's a wonderfully crafted and beautifully written love story. By now, you have no doubt noticed, there are no miracles, no prophets speaking, no dramatic signs or obvious interventions by God. Instead, what Ruth reveals is that God is at work everywhere hidden behind the scenes.

The tide is now turning and Chapter 2 is the turning point of this story. We are told, *“As it happened, she (Ruth) came to the part of the field belonging to Boaz”(2:3)* “As it happened”, Ruth has stumbled on the field belonging to Boaz, who, “as it happens”, is her mother-in-law's relative. And “as it happens” Boaz comes into that exact field, at the exact time that Ruth was working there. It all appears to happen as chance would have it, or was it as God would have it?

There's an old saying: *“A coincidence is a miracle in which God prefers to remain anonymous.”* Is this not God's moment in Ruth? Here God slips in, unnoticed, from the side, by way of a simple “as it happened” — God prepares the way. So often God acts through life's ordinary circumstance, and through the faithfulness of ordinary human beings.

Boaz praises Ruth for her loyalty to her mother-in-law and then asks God's blessings upon her: *“May the LORD reward you for your deeds, and may you have a full reward from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge” (Ruth 2:12)*. Ruth then runs and tells Naomi of this encounter — could it be that Naomi recognize the hand of God in these seemingly by chance coincidences and circumstances that have occurred throughout the day?

Perhaps it is often thus, that we so easily fail to recognise and name those times in our own lives when small miracles begin to happen, when God slips in, unnoticed, from the side, by way of a simple “as it happened” — He prepares the way. Maybe this human drama being played out before us should encourage us to be more aware, more attuned to God's presence and guidance in the mundane moments of each day, through the people we meet, though the ordinary circumstances of life.

Alexander Elchaninov writing in his book, *The Diary of a Russian Priest*, offers this advice on being attuned to the presence of God in our midst:

*We do not notice that life is flowing like water through our fingers, sifting like precious grain from a loosely fastened bag.*

*Constantly, each day, each hour, God is sending us people, circumstances, tasks, which should mark the beginning of our renewal; yet we pay them no attention, and thus continually we resist God's will for us. Indeed, how can God help us? Only by sending us in our daily life certain people, and certain coincidences of circumstance. If we accepted every hour of our life as the hour of God's will for us, as the decisive, most important, unique hour of our life – what sources of joy, love, strength, as yet hidden from us, would spring from the depth of our soul!*

*Let us then be serious in our attitude towards each person we meet in our life, towards every opportunity of performing a good deed; be sure that you will then fulfil God's will for you in these very circumstances, on that very day, in that very hour.*

Every blessing, Linda