

**Ruth 2:1 ¶ And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.**

This chapter opens by introducing another main character in this beautiful piece of history. We are told that Elimelech, Naomi's husband, had a powerful, wealthy kinsman by the name of Boaz.

**Ruth 2:2 And Ruth the Moabite said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.**

**Ruth 2:3 And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.**

Ruth asked Naomi for permission to go and glean ears of corn in the field of some owner that might grant her kind permission. She had evidently been made aware of God's law that allowed for the poor and needy to be provided for in this way.

*Leviticus 23:22 "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God."*

Naomi agreed with her plan. So Ruth went and "her hap" was to find herself gleaning in the part of the field that belonged to Boaz, kin to her on her father-in-law's side. The Hebrew defines "hap" as "something met with through accident or fortune." As events continue to unfold, it becomes clear to me that God's unseen hand was guiding her along the way.

**Ruth 2:4 ¶ And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.**

**Ruth 2:5 Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?**

**Ruth 2:6 And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabite damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab:**

**Ruth 2:7 And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.**

When Boaz came from Bethlehem to check on his fields, he greeted his reapers with a blessing, "The LORD be with you." They responded by pronouncing God's blessing upon him. Evidently Ruth was an attractive young woman because she caught the attention of Boaz, and he asked his supervisor who she was. The supervisor told him that she was the Moabite woman who had come back with Naomi from Moab. He informed Boaz that she had asked permission to glean behind the reapers and had been working steadily since the morning except for a brief rest in the house. I would assume this to be referencing a shelter of some sort for taking breaks out of the sun and eating.

**Ruth 2:8** Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:

**Ruth 2:9** Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of *that* which the young men have drawn.

After learning whom she was, Boaz approached Ruth and told her not to go to any other field to glean. She was to stay with and follow the girls that reaped in his fields. He also told her that he had ordered the young men to leave her alone. He then informed her that she was to drink from the water that had been drawn by his men whenever she was thirsty.

From previous teaching I have learned that Boaz is a type of Jesus. Just as Boaz declared himself Ruth's protector, Jesus has declared Himself our protector if we will but place our faith in Him. Just as Boaz offered to water to quench Ruth's thirst, Jesus has declared Himself to be the living water that will quench our spiritual thirst. Just as Boaz offered his provision to Ruth for the taking, Jesus offers Himself to us freely by His grace.

*Psalms 46:1 "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."*

*John 6:35 "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."*

*Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

**Ruth 2:10** Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I *am* a stranger?

**Ruth 2:11** And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and *how* thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

**Ruth 2:12** The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

Ruth was greatly humbled by the kindness Boaz extended her and responded by bowing before him and wondering aloud why he should extend such grace to her, a stranger to him. Boaz told her that he was aware of how she had served her mother-in-law so faithfully since the death of her husband. He knew that she had willingly forsaken family and homeland to stand by her mother-in-law in a foreign land. He then pronounced a blessing upon her work and asked the LORD, the God of Israel, to reward her amply in view of the faith she had placed in Him as her own LORD.

So we learn that though Boaz did not recognize her face, he was fully aware of the reputation she had already established in the short time she had been in Bethlehem. I am sure that Naomi felt she couldn't say enough good things about her daughter-in-law and took advantage of every opportunity to sing her praise. It would seem that she had already given evidence of her faith in the God of Israel.

**Ruth 2:13** Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

**Ruth 2:14** And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

Ruth basically thanked Boaz for his kindness in comforting and encouraging her in spite of her lowly position. Boaz then invited her to take part in the meal provided for his reapers and even served her personally. He gave her so much food that she couldn't eat it all.

Frankly, that is always how the LORD provides for those who place their faith in Him—bountifully. Though He may allow circumstances in our life that cause us to question, we should cling to His promises with the understanding that His ways are not our ways and that He is always working to conform us to His image.

*Psalms 34:9 "O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him."*

*Matthew 6:30–33 "...O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

*Isaiah 55:8–9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*

*Romans 8:29 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."*

**Ruth 2:15** And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not:

**Ruth 2:16** And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.

**Ruth 2:17** ¶ So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.

When lunch was over and she had returned to gleaning, Boaz commanded his men to even let her glean among the sheaves without rebuke. In fact, he wanted

them to drop some handfuls on purpose for her and again emphasized that they were not to rebuke her for gathering what they had dropped. One commentator noted that the women followed the men and tied together into sheaves the grain stalks that had been cut by the men.

So Ruth gleaned all day and was rewarded with about an ephah of usable barley after beating it. An ephah is equivalent to about a bushel or 29-50 lbs. depending on the source you accept; another commentary stated that it was at least half a month's wages.

**Ruth 2:18** And she took *it* up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

**Ruth 2:19** And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day *is* Boaz.

**Ruth 2:20** And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed *be* he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man *is* near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.

Ruth finally headed home with the grain from her gleaning. She couldn't wait to show Naomi how much she had gotten and give her the leftovers from her lunch. Naomi immediately wanted to know where she had gleaned and pronounced a blessing on the one that had allowed her to glean from his harvest. When Ruth told Naomi that she had gleaned in the fields belonging to Boaz, Naomi immediately recognized this provision as coming from the hand of the LORD. Finally, we hear her utter words of hope and thankfulness. Maybe she was ready to discard the name Mara and once again be known as Naomi.

Naomi informed Ruth that Boaz was one of their closest relatives and qualified as a kinsman-redeemer on their behalf. Easton's Dictionary defines this kinsman as "one charged with the duty of restoring the rights of another and avenging his wrongs." The IVP New Bible Commentary was more specific: "The redeemer of property was to buy back land a relative had sold in time of need (Leviticus 25:25), thus keeping it within the family. If someone sold himself into slavery, his nearest relative was to buy his freedom (Leviticus 25:47-55). A redeemer also had the duty of avenging a murder (Numbers 35:19; Deuteronomy 19:6). The book of Ruth extends his duties to providing an heir for a male relative who has died childless. Usually this duty fell to a brother (Deuteronomy 25:5-10), but in the case of Ruth who had no brothers-in-law, a more distant relative was expected to marry her, as Naomi revealed (ch. 3)."

Again, Boaz is a picture of Jesus, our Kinsman-Redeemer, except that Jesus is the only qualified Redeemer who can save us from our sin.

*Acts 4:10-12* "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought

*of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."*

*John 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*

**Ruth 2:21 And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.**

**Ruth 2:22 And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, *It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.***

**Ruth 2:23 So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law.**

Ruth went on to tell Naomi that Boaz had instructed her to stay with his workers until all the harvest had ended (in early June). This pleased Naomi, and she told Ruth to be sure not to go in anyone else's field. So Ruth stayed close to the women who gleaned for Boaz through both the barley and the wheat harvest. The writer makes a point that Ruth continued to live with Naomi.