

Study of Ruth: Gleaning and a Meeting

Scripture Focus: Ruth 2: 1-13

This chapter opens with an important piece of information for the rest of the story. Naomi had an in-law named Boaz, who was a man of considerable wealth and respect in the community. Ruth graciously volunteers to go into the fields to collect what she can. The Old Testament, Mosaic Law, provides for the poor by requiring farmers to leave sheaves behind for the needy (Leviticus 19:9; 23:22). “As it happened” (Ruth 2:3) Ruth ends up in a field owned by Boaz. Was it coincidence or divine appointment?

When Boaz comes from the city to inspect his laborers, he notices this young woman who is working hard to gather what she can. When asked who she is, notice his workers first describe her as a Moabite, and then the daughter-in-law of Naomi (v. 6). When Boaz then talks to Ruth, he has specific instructions for her, all to promote her well-being and keep her safe (v. 8 - 9). He is doing exactly what he should do, under God’s law. Sadly, there were far too many NOT obeying what God had commanded.

It seems Ruth’s reputation has preceded her! Notice what Boaz says when Ruth asks why he is being so generous and kind to her. Boaz is aware of her devotion to Naomi and personal sacrifice when Ruth left her own family and country to accompany her mother-in-law home. Then Boaz gives Ruth a blessing. ***“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.”*** (v. 12)

- What does this part of the story say regarding the value of reputation?
- Boaz is proclaiming that Ruth has indeed made a wise decision to seek the blessing of ***“the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge.”*** How often do we take advantage of that same refuge, drawing near to God, under his wings? What keeps us from doing so – as was the case for the Jews, even during the time of Jesus. Jesus said, ***“...how often I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and yet you were not willing.”*** (Matthew 23:37)