

Ruth 2:1-13
The Lord Provides a Redeemer
December 2, 2007

I. The Lord's gracious provision: harvest and gleaning

A. The desperate situation of Naomi and Ruth

1. without land or husband or provider
2. Naomi's response: bitterness and blame (1:21)
3. the sin of hopelessness

B. Glimmer of hope: the beginning of the barley harvest (1:22b)

1. Turning point in our story
 - a. the beginning of the restoration of Naomi
 - b. the beginning of the enfolding of Ruth
2. the feeding of Ruth and Naomi
3. the harvest = an opportunity for those who have been blessed to help those less fortunate

C. The gleaning laws

1. the gleaning laws explained

Leviticus 19:9-10 ⁹ "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. ¹⁰ And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.
2. these laws reflect the compassion of God

Deuteronomy 24:21-22 ²¹ When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. ²² You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.

 - a. whose land? The land belongs to the Lord
 - b. His compassion to be expressed in the use of the land
3. Naomi and Ruth return at the right time – the time of harvest and gleaning
4. God gives not only a gracious system, but He gives to Naomi and Ruth a gracious provider

II. The Lord's gracious provider: Boaz

A. Omniscient narrator

1. lets you in on a secret (v. 1)
2. even Naomi doesn't know this yet (v. 20)
3. two important descriptions of Boaz
 - a. Elimelech's relative or kinsman – a possible kinsman Redeemer
 - b. A worthy man of valor – like David
 - i. a pillar in the community
 - ii. uses influence in God-honoring way
4. God providentially directs Ruth to Boaz (v. 3)

B. The character of Boaz

1. a godly employer (v. 4)
2. he recognizes the foreigner – a Moabite (v. 6; compare 1:19)
3. he provides for Ruth in gracious abundance (vv. 8-9; remember v. 2)

C. The fields of Moab vs. the fields of Boaz

1. the fields of Moab → death
2. the fields of Boaz → refuge

III. The Lord's humble servant: Ruth

A. Humility and Responsibility

1. her care and concern for Naomi – she stands in the place of Naomi (vv. 2, 11)
2. she recognizes the grace of God's provision and provider (vv. 2, 7)
3. she works hard (v. 7)

B. Ruth's humble response to the generosity of Boaz (v. 10)

1. why have I found favor?
2. why should you take notice of a foreigner?

C. Boaz praises and blesses Ruth (vv. 11-12)

1. commends her loyalty and faithfulness (v. 11)
 - a. to Naomi
 - b. to Israel?
2. commends her faith
3. commends her to the Lord
Psalm 91:1-4 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. ⁴He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
4. you can understand her joyful response
5. irony: Boaz becomes the answer to his own prayer
 - a. his grace (favor) toward Ruth imitates the grace and favor of the Lord
 - b. he becomes God's instrument of redemption for Ruth and Naomi

IV. Application

A. God's concern for the fatherless and the widow

1. the gleaning laws and the modern church
2. what is true religion?
James 1:27 ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

B. Resting in God's providence

1. Do not be anxious
Matthew 6:34 ³⁴"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.
2. Redemption → God accomplishes the unexpected
3. Your sympathetic Savior
Hebrews 4:15 ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

C. Grace and Responsibility

Ephesians 2:10 ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.