

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**6-12-24**

**Ruth 2**

**Ruth Meets Boaz in the Grain Field – Verse 1**

**<sup>1</sup> Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, a man of standing from the clan of Elimelek, whose name was Boaz.**

**2:1** Naomi had a kinsman: Naomi was related to this man Boaz through her deceased husband, Elimelech. We don't know exactly how he was related, but he was. A man of great wealth: During the time of famine, when Elimelech, Naomi, and their whole family had left the Promised Land and went to Moab, Boaz had stayed behind — and God provided for him. In fact, God made Boaz a man of great wealth. Ten years before, Naomi and her family made a choice, and it was a choice made in a hard time — a time of famine. But they didn't have to make the wrong choice they did. The people of Bethlehem had not perished from hunger. They were still there. And they were blessed more than Naomi's family.

**2:1** A kinsman: This introduces an important word in the book of Ruth — the ancient Hebrew word goel. To say that Boaz was a goel (a kinsman) was more than saying he was a relative; it was saying that he was a special family representative. He was a chieftain in the family.

**Ruth Happens Upon Boaz's Field – Verses 2-3**

**<sup>2</sup> And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." <sup>3</sup> So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek.**

**2:2** When the wheat and barley were ready to be harvested, reapers were hired to cut down the stalks and tie them into bundles. Israelite law demanded that the corners of the fields not be harvested. In addition, any grain that was dropped was to be left for poor people, who picked it up (this was called gleaning) and used it for food (Leviticus 19:9; 23:22; Deuteronomy 24: 19). The purpose of this law was to feed the poor and to prevent the land owners from hoarding. This law served as a type of welfare program in Israel. Because she was a widow with no means of providing for herself, Ruth went into the fields to glean the grain.

**2:2-3** Ruth made her home in a foreign land. Instead of depending on Naomi or waiting for good fortune to happen, she took the initiative. She went to work. She was not afraid of admitting her need or working hard to supply it. When Ruth went out to the fields, God provided for her. If you are waiting for God to provide, consider this: He may be waiting for you to take the first step to demonstrate just how important your need is.

## **Boaz Learns Of Ruth – Verses 4-7**

**<sup>4</sup> Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, “The LORD be with you!” “The LORD bless you!” they answered. <sup>5</sup> Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, “Who does that young woman belong to?” <sup>6</sup> The overseer replied, “She is the Moabite who came back from Moab with Naomi. <sup>7</sup> She said, ‘Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.’ She came into the field and has remained here from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter.”**

**2:4** The LORD be with you: This shows us something of the heart and character of Boaz. Apparently, his workers loved him and had a good relationship with him. You can often tell the real character of a man in authority by seeing how he relates to his staff and by how they think of him.

**2:7** Ruth’s task, though menial, tiring, and perhaps degrading, was done faithfully. What is your attitude when the task you have been given is not up to your true potential? The task at hand may be all you can do, or it may be the work God wants you to do. Or, as in Ruth’s case, it may be a test of your character that can open up new doors of opportunity.

## **Boaz Speaks Kindly To Ruth – Verses 8-9**

**<sup>8</sup> So Boaz said to Ruth, “My daughter, listen to me. Don’t go and glean in another field and don’t go away from here. Stay here with the women who work for me. <sup>9</sup> Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the women. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.”**

**2:8** Stay close by my young women: These were Boaz’s female field workers, who tied together the cut stalks of grain. Boaz told Ruth to stay close to them, so she would be well taken care of.

Do not go to glean in another field: God was blessing Ruth already and all because He guided her to Boaz’s field. Boaz knew that if Ruth stayed in his fields, she would be blessed: In Boaz’s field, Ruth would find companionship (among the young women) - protection (Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you?) - refreshment (when you are thirsty).

**2:9** The kindness of Boaz was wonderful. At this time, we have no indication of a romantic attraction between Boaz and Ruth and we have no idea how Ruth looked (even if she was pretty, she was probably pretty ragged from a whole day of hard work). Yet Boaz extended this kindness to her. We find it pretty easy to be kind to others when we can see a potential pay-off from the investment of our kindness. Yet true kindness is shown when we extend ourselves to others who, as far as we can see, have nothing to give us.

## **Ruth Thanks Boaz For His Kindness – Verses 10-13**

**<sup>10</sup> At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?” <sup>11</sup> Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. <sup>12</sup> May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.” <sup>13</sup> “May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord,” she said. “You have put me at ease by speaking kindly to your servant—though I do not have the standing of one of your servants.”**

**2:10** Since I am a foreigner: This was constantly on Ruth's mind. She was a Moabitess, and not an Israelite. She knew that on the basis of national background, she didn't belong. This made Boaz's kindness to her all the more precious. The Bible says that we should be kind to the strangers among us, but this also applies on another level. Since our society is no longer structured around the family, for many people, their most important circle of association is their friends. Sociologists call this "tribalization" — we become part of a little "tribe," a little circle of friends. The command to love the stranger means that we should not only associate with those of our own tribe, and that we should always welcome those outside of our tribe.

**2:10-12** Ruth's life exhibited admirable qualities: She was hardworking, loving, kind, faithful, and brave. These qualities gained for her a good reputation, but only because she displayed them consistently in all areas of her life. Wherever Ruth went or whatever she did, her character remained the same. Your reputation is formed by the people who watch you at work, in town, at home, in church. A good reputation comes by consistently living out the qualities you believe in— no matter what group of people or surroundings you are in.

### **Boaz Continues To Show Great Favor To Ruth – Verses 14-16**

**<sup>14</sup> At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar." When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. <sup>15</sup> As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, "Let her gather among the sheaves and don't reprimand her. <sup>16</sup> Even pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her."**

**2:14** Dip your bread in the vinegar: Perhaps now, we see the first hint of a romance. Boaz showed great kindness and favor to Ruth at mealtime. It would be enough to have just invited her, but he also invited her to share fully in the meal, even the privileged dipping.

**2:14** She ate and was satisfied, and kept some back: Ruth also may be awakening to some romance towards Boaz; she kept some back. She did not eat all that was offered to her, meaning that she didn't want to seem like a greedy eater in front of Boaz, and that she was sensible enough to take some home to Naomi. Ruth was satisfied, because she answered the generous invitation of Boaz. She was not one of the reapers, but she sat beside the reapers and ate as if she was one of them and she ate and was satisfied. In the same way, those outside the Kingdom of God and its promises can sit among the reapers, at the invitation of Jesus, and by faith they can eat and be satisfied.

**2:15-16** The characters in the book of Ruth are classic examples of good people in action. Boaz went far beyond the intent of the gleaners' law in demonstrating his kindness and generosity. Not only did he let Ruth glean in his field, he also told his workers to let some of the grain fall in her path. Out of his abundance, he provided for the needy. How often do you go beyond the accepted patterns of providing for those less fortunate? Do more than the minimum for others.

### **She Brings Home The Day's Fruits To Naomi – Verses 17-18**

**<sup>17</sup> So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah. <sup>18</sup> She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered. Ruth also brought out and gave her what she had left over after she had eaten enough.**

**2:17-18** She gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned: Yes, God blessed Ruth. Yes, people were generous to her. At the same time, she did work hard. This was a sun-up to sun-down day, and Ruth worked hard all day long. We should use Ruth's example to glean everything we can from the Word of God:

### **Naomi Praises God For His Goodness To Her And Ruth – Verses 19-23**

<sup>19</sup> Her mother-in-law asked her, "Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!" Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. "The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz," she said.

<sup>20</sup> "The LORD bless him!" Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. "He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead." She added, "That man is our close relative; he is one of our guardian-redeemers." <sup>21</sup> Then Ruth the Moabite said, "He even said to me, 'Stay with my workers until they finish harvesting all my grain.'" <sup>22</sup> Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It will be good for you, my daughter, to go with the women who work for him, because in someone else's field you might be harmed." <sup>23</sup> So Ruth stayed close to the women of Boaz to glean until the barley and wheat harvests were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

**2:19-20** Naomi had felt bitter (1: 20-21), but her faith in God was still alive, and she praised God for Boaz's kindness to Ruth. In her sorrows, she still trusted God and acknowledged his goodness. We may feel bitter about a situation, but we must never despair. Today is always a new opportunity for experiencing God's care.

**2:20** Though Ruth may not have always recognized God's guidance, he had been with her every step of the way. She went to glean and "just happened" to end up in the field owned by Boaz who "just happened" to be a close relative. This was more than mere coincidence. As you go about your daily tasks, God is working in your life in ways you may not even notice. We must not close the door on what God can do. Events do not occur by luck or coincidence. We should have faith that God is directing our lives for his purpose.