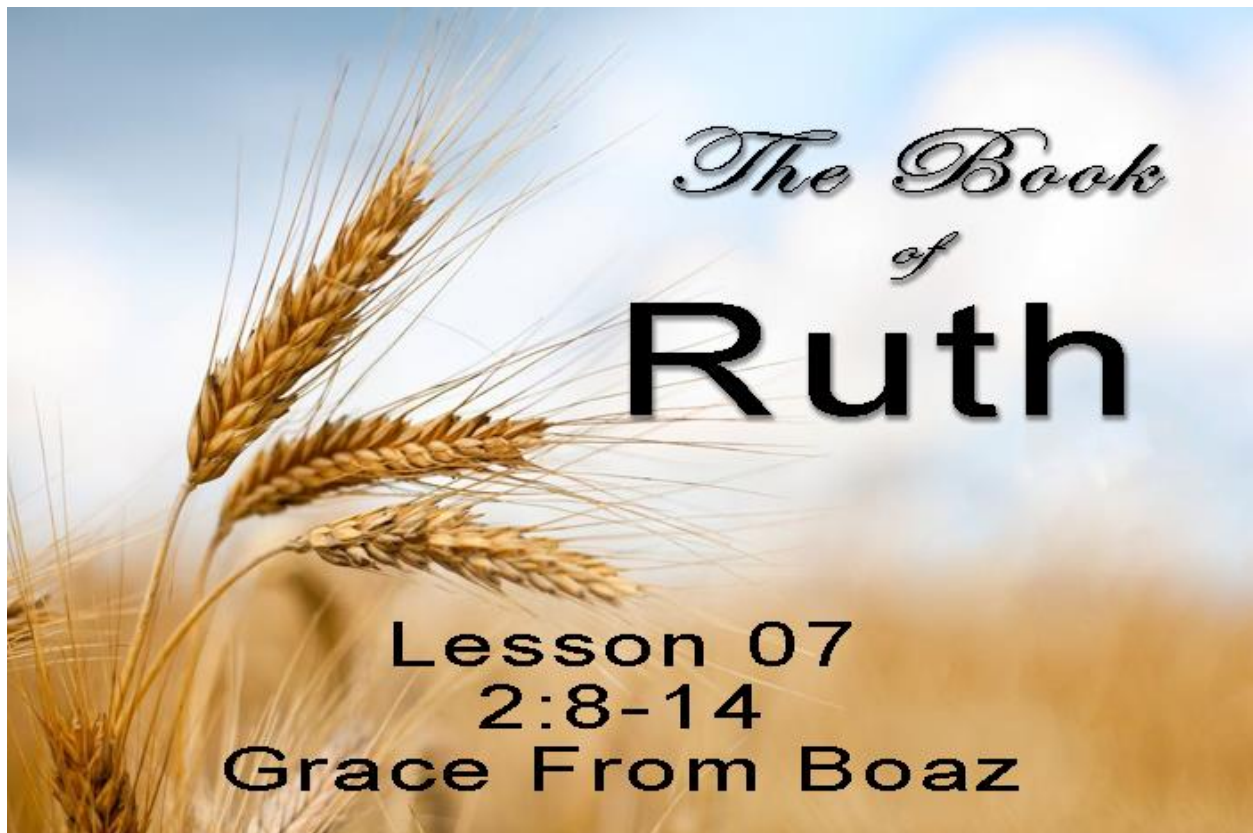


The Book of Ruth
LESSON 7

Introduction and Chapter 2:8-14
"Ruth's Reaping"
Grace From Boaz



LAST WEEK:

We introduced the major characters of the Book of Ruth and their journey from Israel to Moab. Here's our outline and text for what we covered.

I. Ruth's Reaping Ruth 2:1-23

A. Guidance to Boaz's Field: 2:1-3

1. **Boaz: 2:1** Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz.
2. **Let Me Go: 2:2** And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after one in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."
3. **Go, My Daughter: 2:3** So she departed and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers; and she happened to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.

B. **Gleaners in Boaz's Field 2:4-7**

1. **Boaz Arrives: 2:4** Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers, "May the LORD be with you." And they said to him, "May the LORD bless you."
2. **Who Is This?: 2:5** Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?"
3. **The Moabitess: 2:6** And the servant in charge of the reapers answered and said, "She is the young Moabite woman who returned with Naomi from the land of Moab.
4. **Please Let Me Glean: 2:7** "And she said, 'Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' Thus, she came and has remained from the morning until now; she has been sitting in the house for a little while."

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

We were introduced to the central theme of the book, which is Redemption through being married to a Kinsman-Redeemer as it was applied to **Naomi**, and we learned why she disqualified

herself and passed the opportunity down to her daughter-in-law **Ruth**. Neither of them had been aware of the events that will bring this about in their future.

Naomi has allowed Ruth to glean grain from a local field. She has given her instructions to do this safely. Our Kinsman-Redeemer, Boaz, appeared on the scene and has taken a fancy to Ruth.

We want to keep stressing our three applications of this book.

1. The Story itself.
2. Parallel 1 Israel at that time
3. Parallel 2 believers now

Chapter 2:8-14 brings us into the care and provision that comes in abundance for Ruth from Boaz. We are still in "Boaz's Field," and the blessings are about to abound.

The issue of "Why" is dealt with here. Boaz will insist that Ruth continue to come back and glean from this field. While she has been in the care of this field, she has received permission to glean; she has gleaned more than she had anticipated; she has been provided food, water, shelter, and rest while there and all from the master of the field, Boaz.

What is it that has brought Boaz to extend such grace to this Moabite Gentile? What has she done to deserve all of these things. First of all, we must notice that Boaz, by nature and character, is a man who has always allowed the foreigner and the poor to glean. It is his practice to do so. When Ruth comes to the field searching for a place to glean, she has received permission from the field supervisor without question – It is the master's will that this be done.

Boaz will give us a short list of his reasons: 1. All that Ruth has done for Naomi. 2. How Ruth has left her father, mother, and land. 3. How Ruth came to a people that she did not know. Behind these three reasons is a single unifying idea – Ruth's statement to Naomi, "I will go, I will go and where you lodge, I

will lodge. Your people shall be my people, **and your God, my God.**"

If we clearly understand the imagery of the book then this is the central statement, "Your God, *shall be* My God. The story of the book, so far, has been rebellion, chastisement, repentance, and the journey from repentance to renewed fellowship and faith.

We are so used to thinking that when we are trapped in sin, and then we confess our sin, everything is back to normal. We should know instead that everything in life is a process, and the book of Ruth specializes in the process of returning to God. The writer brings us so many nuances of the process. Ruth came to know Jehovah-Elohim while married to Mahlon, and she became a proselyte of the Jewish faith. In turning to Him she had to turn away from her past idols and sins. Then came the introduction to the family of God and the People of God. She realized her need for His sustenance and went to His field to "glean." And she went as one who knew that she was poor and different. She was accepted into the field because it was the character of the Master of the field to be accepting of the foreigner and the poor. He graciously provided work, food, water, rest, and the constant invitation to come back for more.

When the believer first comes to the Lord Jesus Christ, we are foreigners to His grace, and poor in spirit. When we come, He is gracious and gives us important work to do, spiritual food to eat, "Living Water," and shelter under His wings. It is a process. We don't get saved and then arrive in the Body of Christ as mature, glorified members of His family – that takes time, it is a process. He provides for your needs (food, water, rest, and protection) while you have the opportunity to grow into adult spiritual believers.

As the result of this new relationship, we should "throw ourselves headfirst to the ground" and worship Him and adore Him as we recognize His wonderful grace.

THE VISUALIZED TEXT (NASB)

II. Ruth's Reaping – 1:1-23

- A. Guidance to Boaz's Field – 2:1-3
- B. Gleaners in Boaz's Field – 2:4-7
- C. Grace from Boaz – 2:8-14
 - 1. Stay Here – 2:8

Then

***Boaz said to Ruth,
"Listen carefully, my daughter.
Do not go to glean in another field;
furthermore,
do not go on from this one,
but
stay here
with my maids."***

Brief Commentary on Ruth 2:8

Listen carefully! Ruth has come to Boaz and the first thing he has to say to her is, "Listen carefully!" It is not "welcome to my field, are you finding everything you need?" Boaz's first concern is that Ruth understands that there is no other field where she can come like this one.

"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." Acts 4:10-12

The question should have arisen, "Why has Boaz acted so generously?"

The context of the surrounding verses indicates that having foreigners and the poor in his fields was a planned part of his practice in running the fields as owner. He is a man of wealth and power and takes seriously the commandment of the LORD in providing for the less fortunate. His interest lies there.

Why does Boaz call her, "My Daughter?" The informal address to Ruth is based on the fact that Boaz recognizes that she is family, and she is younger than He. It is also a cultural sign of respect toward her.

And furthermore, Boaz has taken an interest in her and following the symbolism of these verses he knows that his care and his supply are not only the best, but what she needs.

Ruth 2:9, Provision

Boaz continues:

***"Let your eyes
be on the field
which they reap and
go after them.
Indeed,
I have commanded the servants
not to touch you.***

***When you are thirsty,
go to the water jars and
drink from what the servants draw."***

Brief Commentary on Ruth 2:9

Now that Ruth is in the field of Boaz, he tells her to watch and pay attention to THE FIELD. See the process of "the field" and how it is worked, how it is labored over, how it is harvested.

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don't you have a

saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.' John 4: 34-38

And only then does Boaz tell Ruth of the provisions he has made for her. He knows the surrounding fields and the dangers that are there. He also... has developed an interest in her.

On a different note, the meaning of the words "touch her" were part of an idiomatic expression that was used in common language to mean sexual contact. The actions and morality of slaves or servants could be the problem here. While the usage of this expression could point directly to this problem it is more probable that Boaz meant that they were not to keep her from trespassing the rules and taking more than just the gleanings. They were not to interfere or punish her for doing so.

Why does Boaz bring up her need for water? Water is a precious commodity in Judah. Who can work a field for any length of time without having to stop for water. Boaz wishes her to stay in his field and glean, she could not do that for long without water. It is easy and not a stretch at all, so see the words of Jesus with the Woman at the Well,

"Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked Him and he would have given you living water.'" John 4:10

Ruth 2:10, Why Favor Me?

Then

She

***fell on her face,
bowing to the ground and
said to him,***

***"Why have I
found favor in your sight that
you***

***should take notice of me,
since I am a foreigner?"***

Brief Commentary on Ruth 2:10

Put yourself in her place; indigent, poor, hungry, thirsty, and taking the risk of going to a field to glean – then finding not only acceptance there, but also a complete invitation to stay, and glean, and drink, and enjoy protection. She fell on her face because of finding GRACE (unmerited favor) instead of all the problems and dangers she expected.

Blessed is Ruth for understanding immediately her proper response to Grace: first obeisance, prostrating herself before her master; and then the question we all ask: "Why?" for... well, wouldn't you be suspicious?

All of Judah has been in the process of cleaning up their idolatrous act – that's why the rains have come, and the grain has grown – because of God's call to repentance. Judah has cleansed herself of idol worshippers and unbelieving foreign wives. Why should Boaz extend his graceful hand to her?

Ruth 2:11, I Have Been Told

And

***Boaz answered and said to her,
 "All that you have done
 for your mother-in-law
 after the death of your husband
 has been fully reported to me, and
 how you left
 your father and
 your mother and
 the land of your birth and
 came to a people
 that you did not previously know.***

Brief Commentary on Ruth 2:11

And the LORD and Boaz, the master of the field, answers "all that you have done – you turned to Me, away from idols, away from father and mother, away from your land and your people – you turned to Me!

What has Ruth done...? She loved and Married Elimelech's son, Loved Elimelech's wife Naomi, repented of her pagan idolatrous life and turned to the God of Israel as her savior, left her own parents and land, returned with Naomi, continues to remain with her and love her, and now gleans to support herself and Naomi.

And Boaz realizes, "Such a woman is this!" and she's young, attractive, available, and part of the tribal family.

Ruth 2:12, Boaz Blesses

***"May
the LORD
reward your work, and
your wages be full from
the LORD, the God of Israel,
under whose wings
you have come to seek refuge."***

Brief Commentary on Ruth 2:12

What a wonderful blessing, but it looks to Ruth's future not the now or the past! She has come to Him for refuge, but there is work to be done, in her and by her. And yes, you have come to Him for refuge – but there is work to be done, in you, and by you.

Looking at Jehovah's blessing; it is for the work she has done [everything since she married Mahlon], may she be paid well for that, may she be paid by the LORD (YHWH), specifically the God (Elohim) of Israel, and it is an acknowledgement of Ruth's spiritual quest with Jehovah-Elohim for shelter under His wings.

Here's just a practical question, wouldn't Boaz suffer the loss of income allowing foreigners and the poor to glean his fields? We should see that Boaz is a man of grace – he sees his responsibility as a child of God to take care of the stranger and the poor – he also sees God's point of view that the owner of the field is only the caretaker of what rightly belongs to the Lord, he can be gracious because his LORD is gracious to him. And so should we be in our dealings with the world around us – He is gracious to us, therefore we should be gracious to all those He calls us to interact with – the poor, the disadvantaged, the foreigner.

Ruth has also already forsaken her idols, her land of idols, and repented (turned around) away from idols to The God of Israel. She is a Believer in the Lord God. She has become a proselyte

Jew. You may remember that the land of Moab was the result of incest by the daughters of Lot. That incident was followed by the cursing of Lot's child Moab and His resulting family for 10 generations. While they were cast away by the Lord the curse did not restrict them from becoming Proselytes or being married in the land of Israel.

Ruth has come back "home" with Naomi and sought refuge with her for this is what we all do when we become believers, we seek refuge from this world. She has been a sinner against God. She has been guilty under her own knowledge and conscience as a Gentile. She has been found guilty under the Mosaic law. She has found acceptance in Naomi's God and now she is a proselyte, and she seeks refuge under the atoning wings of The LORD God.

Ruth 2:13, Ruth's Thanks

Then

she said,

***"I have found favor
in your sight,
my lord,***

for you

***have comforted me and
indeed have spoken kindly***

to your maidservant,

though I am

not like one

of your maidservants."

Brief Commentary on Ruth 2:13

She came to the fields in fear and now she has found herself to be acceptable to the Master of the fields. She came to glean and she found grace in abundance.

Now she takes this opportunity to express her thanksgiving for His grace. She recognizes that Boaz has intentionally spoken

kindly to her. She realizes that she is just not worthy of even being seen as one of his maidservants.

Her first words in this verse show that she recognizes him for who he is, the master of these fields and she has found favor in his sight, "my lord."

Do you see the parallel between Ruth and your position before Your LORD? Do you see the favor you have in His sight? Do you feel the comfort and the kind words of love and grace He speaks to you? And do you recognize that, at one time, you were not as one of His servants, but now are one of His children?

Ruth 2:14, Abundance From Boaz

And

at mealtime

Boaz said to her,

"Come here, that you

may eat of the bread and

dip your piece of bread in the vinegar."

So,

she sat beside the reapers; and

he served her roasted grain, and

she ate and was satisfied and

had some left...

Brief Commentary on Ruth 2:14

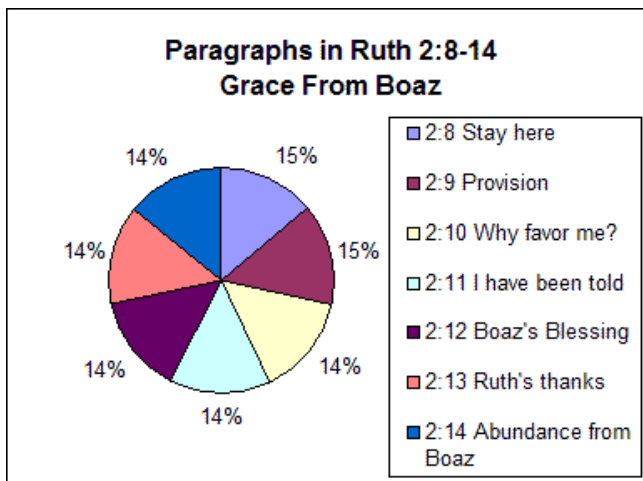
"I'm different, I'm an ex-idolater, I'm just a maidservant, but YOU have comforted me, YOU have spoken kindly to me, YOU don't find me different, and YOU have given me unmerited favor!"

She came to the fields in fear and now she has found herself to be acceptable to the Master of the fields. She came to glean and she found grace in abundance.

The LORD God of Israel has ceased His famine that was upon Judah and many of His people turned around and repented of their sins against Him. The result was He began to show them His grace. Once again there was food, roasted grain, wine was again available, and they ate and were satisfied and had much left over.

Is the same true in your life? How often this life leads us away from dependence upon such a wonderful God. I'm sure you have found an abundance of grace when you have repented of your sins against Him – even if it has to be done daily. Life can be hard, it can be full of temptations – but He is there, every day to be your loyal and graceful friend. He is there in the beloved Jesus, He is there in the active and powerful Spirit, and He is there as your loving Father – everyday, all the time.

Ruth 1:8-14 "Grace from Boaz"



Paragraph Verse Percentage Chart
Equal – Equal - Equal

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Jeremiah 18:15

"Don't stumble from the Ancient Path."

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