

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.”

Ruth 2:2 — “And Ruth the Moabitess 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.”

INTRODUCTION

- Ruth 2:1–3 begins with three ordinary things:
 - a man named Boaz;
 - a widow looking for work;
 - a field where she can glean.
- Yet these verses begin the visible turn from the loss of chapter 1 toward the provision that follows.
- Ruth is **Book 8 of 66**.
 - Ruth 2 is chapter 2 of 4 in Ruth.
 - Ruth 2 is **chapter 234 of 1,189** in the Bible.
- The book takes place “in the days when the judges ruled.”
- Chapter 1 brought:
 - famine;
 - death;
 - widowhood;
 - Naomi's return to Bethlehem with Ruth.
- Naomi said she had come home empty.
- But chapter 1 closed with their arrival “**in the beginning of barley harvest.**”
 - The harvest was already there when they arrived.
- Ruth enters chapter 2 knowing that she and Naomi need food.
 - She does not know which field she will enter.
 - She does not know where that day will lead.
- [SLOW] Before Ruth takes her first step, the narrator tells us about a man whose name was Boaz.

I. A MIGHTY MAN OF WEALTH, WHOSE NAME WAS BOAZ — VERSE 1

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.”

- The verse begins, “**And Naomi had.**”
 - Naomi feels the weight of what she has lost.
 - Yet the narrator tells us about someone already connected to her family.
- Boaz is “**a kinsman of her husband's.**”
 - His exact relationship is not given here.
 - Ruth 3:12 later says another kinsman was nearer.
 - Boaz truly belongs to Elimelech's family.
- Boaz is also called “**a mighty man of wealth.**”
 - He is a man of substance.
 - He has resources.
 - He has standing.
 - The chapter shows him with land, reapers, servants, and authority over his field.
- Then the verse says, “**and his name was Boaz.**”

- o The narrator gives us his name before Ruth ever enters his field.
- o That order is part of the story.
- The reader already knows:
 - o there is a man named Boaz;
 - o he belongs to Elimelech's family;
 - o he has substantial means.
- Ruth's words in verse 2 give no indication that she is setting out to find him.
- Chapter 1 ended with Naomi saying, **"I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty."**
 - o Yet chapter 1 also ended with barley harvest beginning.
 - o Chapter 2 now opens with Boaz already in Bethlehem.
- Ruth sees the need for food.
- The reader has already been shown a man who will soon become part of the provision.
- [ENCOURAGE] **Ruth did not need to know everything ahead of her before she could faithfully handle what was in front of her.**

II. LET ME NOW GO TO THE FIELD, AND GLEAN — VERSE 2

Ruth 2:2 — "And Ruth the Moabitess 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."

- The narrator again calls her **"Ruth the Moabitess."**
 - o She has come to Bethlehem with Naomi.
 - o She is still a foreign woman from Moab.
 - o She is also a widow with very little.
- Those facts make her plan to glean fit the kind of need God had provided for in Israel's law.
- Ruth says, **"Let me now go to the field."**
 - o The initiative comes from Ruth.
 - o She sees useful work she can do.
 - o She asks Naomi to let her go.
 - o Her words are respectful.
 - o Her purpose is clear.
- Ruth says she will **"glean ears of corn."**
 - o In the KJV, "corn" here means grain.
 - o They had arrived at the beginning of barley harvest.
 - o Gleaning meant following after the main harvesters and gathering what remained.
- God had already given Israel a law for this.

Deuteronomy 24:19 — "When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands."

- Ruth is both:
 - o a stranger;
 - o a widow.
- God's law required the landowner to leave opportunity for people in her condition.
 - o The owner left grain.
 - o The needy person gathered it.
- The text does not tell us how much of the Mosaic law Ruth already understood.
- Her proposed work matched the provision God had established.
- Ruth was willing to gather what the reapers left.
- Ruth adds, **"after him in whose sight I shall find grace."**
 - o "Grace" here means favor from another person.

- o She is looking for a field where the person in authority will receive her favorably.
- Later in the chapter:
 - o Boaz will command his men not to trouble her;
 - o Boaz will give her unusual liberty;
 - o Boaz will give her protection.
- Ruth enters the field knowing that the character of the people there will matter.
- Naomi answers, **“Go, my daughter.”**
 - o The narrator calls her **“the Moabitess.”**
 - o Naomi calls her **“my daughter.”**
- Ruth cannot choose the final outcome of this day.
- Ruth can go to the field and work.
- [STRONG] **Faithfulness begins with doing the clear thing that is actually ours to do.**

III. HER HAP WAS TO LIGHT ON THE FIELD BELONGING UNTO BOAZ — VERSE 3

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.”

- Verse 2 gave Ruth’s intention.
- Verse 3 records the action:
 - o **“shewent”**
 - o **“and came”**
 - o **“and gleaned.”**
- She said she would go, and she went.
- She said she would glean, and she got behind the reapers and worked.
- Then the narrator tells us where she ended up:
 - o **“her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz.”**
- “Hap” is old English for something that happens or occurs.
- “To light on” means to come upon or arrive at.
- The wording presents the field as an unplanned arrival from Ruth’s point of view.
 - o She did not announce in verse 2 that she was going to search for Elimelech’s relative.
 - o She went looking for a place to glean.
- Verse 1 said, **“his name was Boaz.”**
- Verse 3 says, **“the field belonging unto Boaz.”**
- [PAUSE] The two verses meet right here.
- Ruth knew she had found a field where she could work.
- **She did not yet know what Boaz would become in the story.**
- The verse closes by repeating that Boaz **“was of the kindred of Elimelech.”**
 - o Ruth has entered the field of a particular man.
 - o He belongs to the family whose losses filled chapter 1.
- This is quiet providence.
 - o Ruth receives no recorded vision naming Boaz’s field.
 - o She receives no recorded sign naming Boaz’s field.
 - o She receives no recorded voice naming Boaz’s field.
 - o Scripture describes her arrival from the human side with the word **“hap.”**
 - o The completed story shows how much that ordinary occurrence came to mean.

Proverbs 16:9 — “A man’s heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.”

- Ruth made a real plan:
 - o **“Let me now go to the field.”**
- She went.
- She came.

- She gleaned.
- Yet Ruth could never have arranged:
 - Boaz's relationship to Elimelech;
 - Boaz's resources;
 - the part Boaz would later play in the family.
- As the chapter continues:
 - Boaz notices Ruth;
 - Boaz protects Ruth;
 - Boaz feeds Ruth;
 - Boaz gives Ruth abundant opportunity to glean.
- Naomi later learns whose field Ruth entered and says the man is near of kin.
- Boaz eventually marries Ruth.
- Obed is born.
- The family line continues through Jesse to David and ultimately to Jesus Christ.
- [SLOW] None of that was visible when Ruth first bent down behind the reapers.
- We know the meaning of this event because God gave us the completed story.
- We do not need to turn every coincidence in our lives into a private message from God.
- We can do what Ruth did:
 - faithfully handle what belongs to us;
 - trust God with circumstances we cannot arrange.
- Ruth could choose to go and work.
- Ruth could not choose everything that would meet her along the way.
- [STRONG] **Faithfulness was her responsibility; the outcome was beyond her knowledge and control.**

CONCLUSION

- Ruth walked into the field without knowing the future attached to it.
- She had enough light to do the next right thing:
 - go;
 - glean;
 - work;
 - care for the need in front of her.
- The rest of the story was already larger than anything she could see.
- That gives us a steady way to live.
 - We do not need to know every outcome before we obey what God has made clear.
 - We do not need to control every circumstance before we act faithfully.
 - We do not need to invent secret meanings for every unexpected event in order to trust God's providence.
- [ENCOURAGE] **Do the work that belongs to you.**
- **Be faithful with the responsibility in front of you.**
- Leave in God's hands:
 - tomorrow;
 - the people you will meet;
 - the doors that may open;
 - the results you cannot command.
- [SLOW] Ruth went out looking for a place to glean.
- [STRONG] **Her hap was to light on the right field.**