



Sowing the Word



Ruth 2

September 13th - September 19th, 2012

*So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God;
and they gave the sense, and
helped them to understand the reading.
(Nehemiah 8:8)*

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Online Helpful Sources:

Precept Austin - Amazing Online Resource with many commentaries and helps: Including David Guzik, Chuck Smith, John MacArther, Ray Steadman CH Spurgeon, John Piper and many more!

http://preceptaustin.org/romans_commentaries.htm

You Version - with multiple translations

You can get this online or with a mobile device.

They even have audio files you can listen to of the Bible

<http://www.youversion.com/>

Calvary Roswell - Previous messages and overview studies by Pastor Jim

http://www.calvaryroswell.com/biblestudies/WednesdayBibleStudies/45_Romans/Index.htm

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Study Questions for Ruth 2

1. Ruth, by her own initiative, undertook solving the problem of food for herself and Naomi through the hard and risky task of gleaning in the grain fields. She seemingly selected at random the field in which she would glean. God works through ordinary choices to provide for those who trust him. Can you think of an instance in which you thought your actions were your own, only to find that God had directed your path? Have you shown Him your appreciation?
2. Boaz gave Ruth the special privilege of gleaning right behind the young women, and assured her that no one under his authority would taunt her or try to drive her away from his fields, even though she was present before the proper time for gleaners to come in. What example should we follow by the hospitality Boaz showed to Ruth? Do we go "beyond the call of duty" for those in need?

3. Boaz's instructions to his reapers as they returned to work after lunch made Ruth's gleaning a great deal more productive. Boaz provided for Ruth much more than the law of gleaning required of him. Is there someone who has provided for you more than what you expected? Better yet, is there someone *you* have provided much more than expected?
4. Naomi told Ruth to stay in Boaz's field where she would be safe and not be harrassed. We also need to stay in God's field where He has placed us and not seek happiness and satisfaction other than where He has us, so that we may be safe and secure. Do you find yourself in that field where God wants you to be?

With the Word Bible Commentary

Ruth was a young believer, but she knew enough of the Word to understand that she was permitted to glean in the fields during the harvest (Lev. 19:9–10). She trusted the God who was concerned about widows and the poor (Exod. 22:22; Deut. 10:18), and He did not fail. When we trust God and obey Him, He begins to work on our behalf (Prov. 3:5–6).

There were at least two men in Bethlehem who could permanently deliver Ruth and Naomi from their poverty and loneliness, and God providentially led Ruth to the field of one of them, Boaz. (See Ps. 25:9; Isa. 42:16.) It was not the bitterness of Naomi but the faithfulness of Ruth that changed the picture.

Boaz protected Ruth and provided for her even before she discovered who he was. (On his part, it was probably love at first sight!) Instead of living on leftovers, Ruth became a friend of “the lord of the harvest” who gave her generous gifts. Can you see in all of this a picture of what Christ has done for His own?

Wiersbe, W. W. (1991). *With the Word Bible Commentary* (Ru 1:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Matthew Henry

There is scarcely any chapter in all the sacred history that stoops so low as this to take cognizance of so mean a person as Ruth, a poor Moabitish widow, so mean an action as her gleaning corn in a neighbour's field, and the minute circumstances thereof. But all this was in order to her being grafted into the line of Christ and taken in among his ancestors, that she might be a figure of the espousals of the Gentile church to Christ, Isa. 54:1. This makes the story remarkable; and many of the passages of it are instructive and very improvable. Here we have, I. Ruth's humility and industry in gleaming corn, Providence directing her to Boaz's field (v. 1–3). II. The great favour which Boaz showed to her in many instances (v. 4–16). III. The return of Ruth to her mother-in-law (v. 18–23). Naomi had now gained a settlement in Bethlehem among her old friends; and here we have an account,

I. Of her rich kinsman, Boaz, a mighty man of wealth, v. 1. The Chaldee reads it, mighty in the law. If he was both, it was a most rare and excellent conjunction, to be mighty in wealth and mighty in the scriptures too; those that are so are mighty indeed. He was grandson of Nahshon, who was prince of the tribe of Judah in the wilderness, and son of Salmon, probably a younger son, by Rahab, the harlot of Jericho. He carries might in his name, Boaz—in him is strength; and he was of the family of Elimelech, that family which was now reduced and brought so low. Observe, 1. Boaz, though a rich and great man, had poor relations. Every branch of the tree is not a top-branch. Let not those that are great in the world be ashamed to own their kindred that are mean and despised, lest they be found therein proud, scornful, and unnatural. 2. Naomi, though a poor contemptible widow, had rich relations, whom yet she boasted not of, nor was burdensome to, nor expected any thing from when she returned to Bethlehem in distress. Those that have rich relations, while they themselves are poor, ought to know that it is the wise providence of God that makes the difference (in which we ought to acquiesce), and that to be proud of our relation to such is a great sin, and to trust to it is great folly. II. Of her poor daughter-in-law, Ruth. 1. Her condition was very low and poor, which was a great trial to the faith and constancy of a young proselyte. The Bethlehemites would have done well if they had invited Naomi and her daughter-in-law first to one good house and then to another (it would have been a great support to an aged widow and a great encouragement to a new convert); but, instead of tasting the dainties of Canaan, they have no way of getting necessary food but by gleaning corn, and otherwise, for aught that appears, they might have starved. Note, God has chosen the poor of this world; and poor they are likely to be, for, though God has chosen them, commonly men overlook them.

Her character, in this condition, was very good (v. 2): She said to Naomi, not, "Let me now go to the land of Moab again, for there is no living here, here there is want, but in my father's house there is bread enough." No, she is not mindful of the country from which she came out, otherwise she had now a fair occasion to return. The God of Israel shall be her God, and, though he slay her, yet will she trust in him and never forsake him. But her request is, Let me go to the field, and glean ears of corn. Those that are well born, and have been well brought up, know not what straits they may be reduced to, nor what mean employments they may be obliged to get their bread by, Lam. 4:5. When the case is thus melancholy, let Ruth be remembered, who is a great example, (1.) Of humility. When Providence had made her poor she did not say, "To glean, which is in effect to beg, I am ashamed," but cheerfully stoops to the meanness of her circumstances and accommodates herself to her lot. High spirits can more easily starve than stoop; Ruth was none of those. She does not tell her mother she was never brought up to live upon crumbs. Though she was not brought up to it, she is brought down to it, and is not uneasy at it. Nay, it is her own motion, not her mother's injunction. Humility is one of the brightest ornaments of youth, and one of the best omens. Before Ruth's honour was this humility. Observe how humbly she speaks of herself, in her expectation of leave to glean: Let me glean after him in whose sight I shall find grace. She does not say, "I will go and glean, and surely nobody will deny me the liberty," but, "I will go and glean, in the hope that somebody will allow me the liberty." Note, Poor people must not demand kindness as a debt, but humbly ask it, and take it as a favour, though in ever so small a matter. It becomes the poor to use entreaties. (2.) Of industry. She does not say to her mother-in-law, "Let me now go a visiting to the ladies of the town, or go a walking in the fields to take the air and be merry; I cannot sit all day moping with you." No, it is not sport, but business, that her heart is upon: "Let me go and glean ears of corn, which will turn to some good account." She was one of those virtuous women that love not to eat the bread of idleness, but love to take pains. This is an example to young people. Let them learn betimes to labour, and, what their hand finds to do, do it with their might. A disposition to diligence bodes well both for this world and the other. Love not sleep, love not sport, love not sauntering; but love business. It is also an example to poor people to work for their living, and not beg that which they are able to earn.

Now Boaz himself appears, and a great deal of decency there appears in his carriage both towards his own servants and towards this poor stranger. Towards his own servants, and those that were employed for him in reaping and gathering in his corn. Harvest-time is busy time, many hands must then be at work. Boaz that had much, being a mighty man of wealth, had much to do, and consequently many to work under him and to live upon him. As goods are increased those are increased that eat them, and what good has the owner thereof save the beholding of them with his eyes? Boaz is here an example of a good master. 1. He had a servant that was set over the reapers, v. 6. In great families it is requisite there should be one to oversee the rest of the servants, and appoint to each their portion both of work and meat. Ministers are such servants in God's house, and it is requisite that they be both wise and faithful, and show their Lord all things, as he here, v. 6. 2. Yet he came himself to his reapers, to see how the work went forward, if he found any thing amiss to rectify it, and to give further orders what should be done. This was both for his own interest (he that wholly leaves his business to others will have it done by the halves; the master's eye makes a fat horse) and it was also for the encouragement of his servants, who would go on the more cheerfully in their work when their master countenanced them so far as to make them a visit. Masters that live at ease should think with tenderness of those that toil for them and bear the burden and heat of the day. 3. Kind and pious salutations were interchanged between Boaz and his reapers. (1.) He said to them, The Lord be with you; and they replied, The Lord bless thee, v. 4. Hereby they expressed, [1.] Their mutual respect to each other; he to them as good servants, and they to him as a good master. When he came to them he did not fall a chiding them, as if he came only to find fault and exercise his authority, but he prayed for them: "The Lord be with you, prosper you, and give you health and strength, and preserve you from any disaster." Nor did they, as soon as ever he was out of hearing, fall a cursing him, as some ill-natured servants that hate their master's eye, but they returned his courtesy: "The Lord bless thee, and make our labours serviceable to thy prosperity." Things are likely to go on well in a house where there is such good-will as this between master and servants. [2.] Their joint-dependence upon the divine providence. They express their kindness to each other by praying one for another. They show not only their courtesy, but their piety, and acknowledgement that all good comes from the presence and blessing of God, which therefore we should value and desire above any thing else both for ourselves and others.

Henry, M. (1994). Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: Complete and unabridged in one volume (Ru 2:4–16). Peabody: Hendrickson.