

## Ruth 2:18-23

### The abundant evidence of grace—2:18

- 1) Ruth returns to the city with the food Yahweh graciously provided through Boaz and Ruth's hard work. (think large bag of dog food or softener salt)

### The informative conversation—2:19-22

- 1) Naomi inquires—2:19a
  - a) Legitimate questions—*“Where did you gather today and where did you work?”* (cf. 2:2)
    - i) Because of the amount of grain she brought home? (cf. 2:17-18)
  - b) Prayer of blessing—*“May the one (yet unknown) who took notice of you be blessed.”* (cf. 2:2, 10, 13)
    - o **Note:** It is appropriate to pray for people we may not know by name
  - c) Ruth informs Naomi appropriately—2:19b
- 2) Naomi evaluates Boaz—2:20-22
  - a) Prayer of blessing—2:20a *“May he be blessed by Yahweh,*
    - i) Why? *because he has not neglected his loyal-mercy [hesed] to the living* (Ruth and Naomi) *and the dead* (Elimelech and Mahlon).”
      - **Note:** This is the focal point of this paragraph
      - **Note:** remember Naomi's blessing in 1:8 and Boaz's blessing in 2:12
    - ii) “He” probably refers to Boaz and not Yahweh (cf. 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 2:5)
      - **Note:** Boaz mirrors the image of His God by freely showing loyal-mercy to the needy, just like Ruth (cf. 1:8; 3:10)
      - **Note:** Yahweh is under no obligation to show Ruth any mercy or grace
  - b) An explanation of Boaz's **responsibility** to be generous—2:20b (cf. 2:1 [moda]; 3:12)
    - i) Speaking broadly—*“The man is a relative [qarob] of ours,*
    - ii) Speaking specifically—*he is one of our closest relatives [ga'al].”*
  - c) Ruth summarizes Boaz's **willingness** to be generous—2:21 (cf. 2:8-9)
    - **Note:** Ruth is identified as a Moabitess. This story began with Naomi being the resident alien (cf. 1:1), and now that position belongs to Ruth. She apparently remains an outsider to most of their society.
      - i) Location—*“You should stay close to my male servants*
      - ii) For how long—*until they have finished all my harvest.”*
- 3) Naomi evaluates the situation and gives Ruth advice—2:22
  - a) Evaluation—*“It is good, my daughter,*
  - b) Advice
    - Remember the culture of the time of the Judges (cf. Judges 21:25)
      - i) *that you should go out with his female workers,*
      - ii) *so that you will not be harmed in another field.”*
    - **Note:** Naomi's bitterness seems to be receding.

### A summary of the weeks to follow—2:23

- 1) Ruth takes Naomi's advice—<sup>23</sup> *So she kept close to the female workers of Boaz, to gather until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest* (for 2-3 months). (cf. 1:22)
- 2) Ruth's devotion to Naomi—*And she lived with her mother-in-law.* (cf. 1:16-17)

**Question:** What will happen to the widows when the harvests are completed?