

I Have found Favor in Your Eyes; Ruth 2

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So beginning from chapter two in verse one, we read this. Now, Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. So the story now introduces the third of the three main characters. The readers now made aware of this man Boaz, were made aware of his connection to Elimelech.

He's of the clan of Elimelech, which a clan is just simply a subdivision of a tribe. So he's of the clan of Elimelech. The reader immediately recognizes the significance because we talked about Elimelech in chapter one and Elimelech being the father of the family. Now we read of this man, Boaz, who is of the same clan, and we read that his name is Boaz.

And so we're already told a little bit about him. The name Boaz doesn't appear anywhere else in scripture as the name of another person, but it does appear one other instance in scripture as the name of not a person but an object. When Solomon finishes the construction of the temple in first Samuel, I'm sorry, first Kings chapter seven, he names the north pillar and the south pillar, the two central pillars of the temple.

He gives them names and the temple, the pillar of the north side of the temple is given the name Boaz. So an interesting connection there. This pillar of the temple, the name Boaz literally means something like In the strength of Yahweh or in the strength of Jehovah, our God, he names this pillar. So just as the pillar is like this pillar of the temple, so also is Boaz, something of the pillar of community of the community, as we'll see as we move forward.

But this name Boaz, meaning something like the strength of Yahweh, we read that he's called a worthy man or your translation might have something like a man of substance or a man of wealth or man of power. a mighty man. This is a word that has a very wide range of meanings. We found this word used quite a bit in the Old Testament to describe all kinds of people.

In Judges chapter 6 and verse 12, it describes Gideon as a mighty man of valor. We see the same word used to describe David's mighty men, his sort of inner core of elite warriors. Second Samuel 17 and verse 8, it describes David's mighty men. Proverbs chapter 31 in verse 10, it describes the Proverbs 31 woman, so it always has a positive application, but it means everything from a man of wealth or a person of means, a person of substance, a person of valor, of military experience, of military power, of strength.

It means a person of standing, a person of influence. And so this wide range of meanings can mean a lot of things for this man, Boaz, but it always means something very much positive. And so we're given this positive view of this man, Boaz. He's a man of standing in the community, a man of being. We'll see how the elders of the city treat him in chapter three, and we'll see that he's a man of influence.

When he speaks, the elders of the, of the city seem to listen and they gather to hear what he has to say. We're going to see in chapter two here that he's a man of means. He's a man of moral courage. He's a man of. Outward righteousness. We'll see all these things in this man, Boaz. But now we're

introduced to Boaz, but then the story leaves Boaz and it takes a turn back in ch in verse two, back now to ch to Ruth.

But in verse two, Ruth becomes, for the first time the centerpiece of the story, she becomes the center character beginning in verse two for chapter two here. And we read this in verse two, and Ruth, the Moabite said to Naomi, so here we see. The fourth of our brackets. Remember last Sunday we talked about those three brackets in which the author is using phrases to direct our attention to direct our thoughts where he wants to direct them.

So here we see the fourth occasion in which he uses these types of brackets. And we so so we see the words in verse two and Ruth the Moabite said. If you look down to verse 21 of the same chapter, we see the same words and Ruth the Moabite So there is another set of brackets bracketing basically most of chapter two with the exception of this, the last sentence or so.

But what this does is this brackets off chapter two to say the focus now is going to be on Ruth and her foreign condition, her alien condition, her status of being a foreigner, a sojourner, an alien in the land. This is what chapter two is going to focus on. And Ruth, the Moabite said to Naomi, Let me go to the field and glean.

So here she says, let me go to the field and glean by glean. She means collect some barley harvest, but it's a different thing from just harvesting. We find even a different word than what the word that was used in chapter one, verse 22 to describe the harvesters or the harvest harvesters. This is the word translated glean, and it's basically doing the same thing as harvesting barley, but it's doing it in a different way, or it's doing it, I should say, from a different perspective.

Instead of the harvesters harvesting the crop for the owner of the crop, instead this is gathering some of the remnants of the crop for personal use. So this gathering, this gleaning that's taking place, what this is, is a reflection of the law of God, of the providence of God, and his care and his concern for the poor and the outcast and the foreigner and the sojourner of the land.

We find three times in the Old Testament scriptures, this providence or this law regarding gleaning. Most specifically, we find it in Leviticus 19 verses nine through 10. It's a description here of the law of gleaning in which the, the farmers are told that when they harvest the crop there to leave the corners unharvested.

And so as they go around, maybe a rectangular field, they're not to glean or they're not to to cut the harvest all the way up to the corners or to leave the edges. And then as they're collecting up the harvest and they're tying it up in bundles, they are not to stop and pick up those pieces that they drop.

They're not to go back over the field a second time, but instead, those pieces of barley or those pieces of wheat that are missed the first time are to be left. The same thing applies with the vineyard. They're not to go back over the grapes a second time, looking for those grapes that they might've missed the first time around, or as they're gathering them and putting them in baskets, and some might fall out there to leave those.

And the purpose is that the poor of the land are to come by. And that is what, that they can then. This gleaning that they gather is then their source of, of, of food. It's their, their, means of providing

for themselves. So she says, let me go and glean. So she now has been made aware of this law, of this provision of gleaning that is in place in the land of Israel.

As her and Naomi have come back, perhaps Naomi is the one who has told her of this, or perhaps someone else in the town of Bethlehem has told them of this provision. practice of gleaning. And she says, let me go and glean. So let's think for just a moment about just what a remarkable thing that God has provided for in his law for the poor of the land.

We see in the Leviticus chapter 19 there, we see that this law is specifically geared toward the poor of the land, specifically the widow and the sojourner of which Ruth is both. And this law, this provision of gleaning is intended to To provide something for two groups of people. First, it provides for the farmer, the teaching, the context that's necessary to teach the farmer, the law or the rule or the principle of generosity.

It teaches the farmer to be generous with his crops. So think of this from the perspective of the farmer. The farmer has bought the seed. He paid for the seed. He planted the seed. He sowed the seed or he paid his employees to so the seed. His land grew the crop and his people are now harvesting the crop.

But we're told that part of his crop is not his own. Part of his crop belongs to others. Part of his belongs to the poor. And God puts this in such a way as to say if you take from the gleanings, you are taking something from others, from the poor. So imagine now the perspective that this teaches the farmer that though these were my seeds, though this was my land, though I did the work, Part of this is not my own.

Part of what God has given to me belongs to others. What a great principle to be taught in God's law that part of the resources that come from your work, part of the fruit of your hands, part of the fruit of your labors is not yours. But is owed to the poor of the land. So this teaches the farmer the principle of generosity.

On the other hand, it teaches the poor something else. And it does something, it does both of this while providing a means for the poor to eat. What it teaches the poor is this. It teaches them that the economy of the land, the system of the land, the social network of the land is to be established in such a way To provide the poor an opportunity to work for themselves to provide for themselves.

It preserves the dignity of the poor. It preserves the dignity of the widow, the dignity of the farmer, and it preserves that by not just giving them a handout. But instead, it provides a means or an opportunity by which they are able to eat by the fruit of their own hands. So you see how beautifully the system works.

Instead of insulting them, instead of, offending their dignity, or just to put it another way, they It would be unloving to the poor to say to them, since you're poor, let's just give you everything that you need to eat. It would also be unloving to the farmer to say to the farmer, listen, you just keep everything that you grow and it's all yours.

And so you might, if you wanted to turn to Leviticus 19 in your own Bibles, I know it's in your notes there, but if you were looking at this in your own Bibles, you would probably see a subheading

right above that. It says something like, Love your neighbor as yourself or loving neighbor, something like that.

My Bible has a subheading like that. Love your neighbor as yourself, because this is the directive of God as to how to love the poor. Well, a society loves the poor. Well, by ensuring that there are mechanisms or means or opportunities by which those who are disadvantaged are able to earn something of their own living and of their own keep.

Amen. Likewise, this is loving the farmer by saying to the farmer, listen, we want to protect you from greediness. We want to protect you from thinking that when you give to the work of the Lord, you're giving something from your own means. Instead, we want you to understand that you are simply giving what was already owed to them.

What God intended for them to have By way of your hands and by way of your land and by way of your seed you see how that works So you can also see just how far we've strayed from such a system such a system that exists within our economy today We all as good Christians. We all should have a heart for the poor.

We should also have a soft place in our hearts for those who are in a position in life in which they're disaffected or disenfranchised and maybe they're having a difficult time. Instead of how our society so often treats that, which is to say, here is a handout to help you in this time, Instead, a society, a godly society should endeavor to have means and mechanisms in place to afford opportunities that those who are disadvantaged can then provide for themselves.

So you see the beauty of God's law here, this law of gleaning. So she says, let me go to the field and do this gleaning. Now, as we think about her going to the field to do the gleaning, make sure that you have in your mind, This picture, this idea of what she's going to do that is not pleasant. Gleaning in the field would not have been a pleasant duty.

It would not have been any sort of romantic idea of her just sort of strolling along, picking up grain, and taking it home to eat. Instead, this is hard, menial labor, in which one spends virtually the entire day bent over. And then, not only are they doing this hard, menial labor out in the sun, but also they are doing it in a rather humiliating type of way, because everybody in the field knew the difference between the Reapers.

And the gleaners and so the gleaners who are there to glean the fields, everyone knew that they were the poor, they were the ones who didn't have their own means. And so there they are there to gather for their own food by means of the graciousness of the farmer, so to speak. So it's both a menial job, it's a menial task, and it's not a very, it's not a very glamorous type of task.

But still, she says, may we go out and may I go out and Glean in the fields among the ears of grain after him and whose sight I shall find favor. That's the same word that's often used for grace there. Find grace in his eyes or favor in his eyes. We find the same word. In, for example, Genesis 6 and verse 8, Noah found favor with God or Genesis 39, how Joseph found favor with the, the head of the prison there.

And so she says, may I go out behind him in whose eyes I find favor. That just simply means that she doesn't know, she doesn't know whose field she might end up in. And she said to her, this is now

Naomi, she said to her, go my daughter. So we don't really know the sense in which she said, go my daughter. We don't.

Unfortunately, have the tone of the way that people speak and recorded for us in the scripture. And so we don't know if she said it sort of snarky like, well, go ahead. Or she might have, I think she probably said something more like this, something more of a resignation in which Naomi said something to the effect, I wish it wasn't this way.

I wish we didn't have to live this way. I wish you didn't have to do this. But we both recognize that you do so go ahead my daughter now verse three So she set out and went out and gleaned in the field after the Reapers and she happened to come to the part of the field Belonging to Boaz who was of the clan of Elimelech second time now that we're told Boaz clan of Elimelech.

I think the writer wants us to to see that and see it clearly Boaz

So she just happened to come across this field. Now, if you're reading in the King James, the King James says this and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was the kindred of Elimelech. Now, a couple of weeks ago, when we looked at Ruth's departing speech, we made note of the fact that we are glad that we haven't thrown away our King James.

Not because it's the most accurate of the translations, but because it is indeed the most beautiful. And so we looked at Ruth's departure speech, and we just took the time to look at that from the King James language, because it is so poetic and so beautiful in its expression. So we're glad that we still have that.

But now here, looking at this passage, this makes us glad that we also have So we have modern translations as well, because as the King James says, and her hap was to light upon the field belonging to Boaz. I doubt any of us, if we read that phrase apart from the context, we would really know what her hap was.

But it's just an old way of saying, She happened, or she chanced upon this. And so, we're glad that we have our modern translation that makes that a little clearer for us. But basically what the writer is saying is, is something akin to our modern vernacular of, And luck would have it. And as chance would have it, she happened to come across the field of Boaz.

Now the writer says that, but he actually says it in a way that's even more forceful than that. There is a particular rhetorical or literary technique And That's often employed in the Hebrew in which what when a writer wants to emphasize a verb He will do something called doubling the verb. He will double the verb he will take the verb and Use it two times in a row the first time in the infinitive and the second time in the imperfect So it sounds something like this And to walk, I walk.

If I were to really emphasize the fact that I'm walking, I would say, And walking, I walked. Something like that. Well, that's a technique called doubling, and a writer only uses that when they want to put extreme emphasis on a verb that takes place in a sentence. The writer's going to use that technique three times in chapter two.

This is the first. So he doubles the word for chance. And so literally he says, And chancing she chanced. In other words, he is putting heavy emphasis on this word chance, or the idea of chance. or happenstance or coincidence. And so why would he do that? Why would he put such emphasis

on she happened to come across the field of Boaz in one of the books of the Bible that most clearly speaks to us of the providential hand of God working unseen and all the events of the story.

Why would the writer emphasize Boaz? Chance so much. And I think the reason is that the writer is just putting this awkward amount of emphasis on chance as if to say, wink, wink, and she happened upon his field, or this was really coincidence, as though the author wants to stand up and scream to us. You can't really believe that this was coincidence, can you?

You can't really believe that this happened by chance. Instead, the same hand that brought the famine is the same hand that took Elimelech's life. And the same hand that took Elimelech's life is the same hand that took Maelon and Cilion's life. And that very same hand is the one who brought Ruth. Into the field of Boaz.

Now, this is going to be the providential work of God, and it's going to be the providential work of God in at least two ways. First, Boaz must be of the right clan, and the writers told us twice now that he is of the right lineage. He's of the clan of Elimelech, but also Boaz must be something else. Boaz must be a man of kindness and generosity, because if Boaz is of the clan of Elimelech, And Ruth comes to glean in his field and he shoes her away, or he has his reapers tell her to leave and go somewhere else.

We don't glean over here. Then we're still in the same position of having the providential seed of Messiah threatened. In order to preserve the seed of Messiah, which is a major theme of the Old Testament, preserving the seed of Messiah, in order for that to be preserved, the providential hand of God has to bring about The kinsmen Redeemers will see the one of the right clan, and he has to be a man of great kindness and generosity.

And he has to be accepting of Ruth, the foreigner, into his field. So here we begin to see this working of God's hand. Now, she chanced upon chance to come into his field. So from Ruth's point of view, this is exactly what's happened. You ever, you ever said that to yourself? It just happened to work out like this.

And boy, God did a work through that. Well, no, it didn't just happen. It didn't chance upon chance. That was the providential hand of God working. But the providence of God is something that is rarely ever seen in the present. never seen in the future, but the providential hand of God, if it's ever going to be seen, will always be seen in the past, won't it?

It'll always be seen looking backward. Like John Flavel, the Puritan, once wrote that the providence of God often has to be read like the Hebrew letters backwards, just like you have to read backwards. the letters of your life or the events and the incidents of your life. So often you can look back and you can see how God used circumstances and events.

You never would have seen that as they were happening and you certainly wouldn't have seen that into the future. But just as Ruth looks upon this and she happens to chance upon chance upon the field of Boaz, We, the reader, know there's no way God, of course, is directing all of this. So she set out, she went, she gleaned in the field after the reapers, and she happed.

It was her hap. She happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz. Who was of the clan of a limelight verse four and behold Boaz came from Bethlehem and he said to the reapers the Lord be with you and they answered the Lord bless you now you have you ever read that and ask

yourself why is that there you should ask yourself that question frequently why that verse I just read why is that there did it have to be there because it really doesn't seem to even need to be there does it It doesn't affect the storyline.

In fact, let's take it out. Verse 4, And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem. Verse 5, Then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers, Whose young woman is this? You see? The story flows just as well without it. So why is that there? The narrator is just narrating a greeting between Boaz and his workers in the field.

And I think the reason that it's here is because the writer is beginning to show us something of the character of Boaz. Boaz comes into his field and notice what he says, The Lord bless you, using the covenantal name of Yahweh. The Lord be with you. And they answer, The Lord bless you. So we're beginning to see something here of this man, Boaz.

He comes into his field. He's not the supervisor, the owner of the field that pulls up in the great big long car and then rolls out of the back and puts on the \$200 shades. And looks out over his field, and looks at his balance sheet, and then tells the foreman that they need to be producing more, and then gets back into his air conditioned car and moves on.

Instead, he is the one who comes to the fields and immediately he expresses this heartfelt desire that the Lord would be with them, that Yahweh would bless them, that his presence is with them as they labor in his fields. And they respond immediately with the same blessing. You just get this sense. That there is a relationship that has been cultivated between Boaz and his and his workers that is something that goes far deeper than just an employer and an employee or the owner of a land and his kinspeople or his clansmen who are working the land.

Instead, you see something of a relationship between employer and employee that is based upon God that's based upon his relationship with Yahweh. And their relationship with Yahweh and all that is brought out, even in the greeting that he gives to them, you get the sense here that Boaz is not the type of man that is a different person on Sabbath and then a different person altogether during the week.

And you get the idea that Boaz doesn't have a synagogue personality and then a field personality. But instead, you get the sense that Boaz takes the Lord with him everywhere he goes, and he takes his faith with him everywhere he goes. And as he greets his workers in the field, it's the same thing as greeting the fellow worshiper in the synagogue on Sabbath.

Or it's the same thing as greeting a close kinsman. He says, the Lord be with you. Yahweh and his blessings be with you. They answered the Lord bless you. Wouldn't you just love to work in an environment like that? Some of you don't work in an environment like that. Some of you remember not working in an environment like that.

But what an environment to work in when the employer comes and he says, listen, the first thing I want to say to you before we even talk about how much you've gotten reaped, how much you've gotten harvested, how the harvest is going. I want you to know. I'm praying for you. I want you to know that it is my wish that the Lord would bless you in your endeavors today.

Now let's talk about what you're doing in the field today. What a man that we're beginning to be shown here. He said to the reapers, the Lord be with you. And they answered, the Lord bless you.

Now don't forget this context. The context is in the season, the time of the judges. We talked about this. On the previous two Sundays, that this is the most chaotic, the most violent, one of the most idolatrous periods in Israel's history.

This is a period in which idolatry was rampant in Israel, chaos and violence were the norm. And yet we're shown once again a clear picture that God will always have His true remnant. It will never be a dark enough time. The night will never be dark enough. The society will never be wicked enough in which God's remnant is ever stamped out.

The darkest of times in Israel's history. Here we're shown this snapshot of a man who loves Yahweh with all of his heart, mind, soul, and strength and shows that love to those people who are working under his care. And they respond by saying, we recognize that the Lord is with you and we are glad to be under your employment because you are a fair and generous and godly man.

And so we see this This bright light, the shining light in the midst of the darkest time of Israel's history. The Lord bless you, they say. Then verse five, then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers, whose young woman is this? He's checking her out. Whose woman is this here? He says.

Actually, it's not so much just checking her out. It's, it's more has, has to do with who does she belong to? Who does this woman belong to? Not in the sense of property, not in the sense that she's a slave, but in the sense of who is she on, whose headship is she under? Whose family is she part of? You see, this is a day in which all women, all women in this culture, were part of a family.

And that family was headed by a patriarch. They were part of a clan, which was part of a tribe. And so his question is, which tribe is she of? Which clan is she of? Whose family is she of? I think that he's probably asking that because he wants to know who is responsible for not taking care of her. Because she is a poor person.

Apparently she's a widow, and that's o that's obvious for him to see. And yet she's gleaning in the field. So some male in her life is not taking care of her. And I think he wants to know who is this, who's, who's not taking care of her. And then he's told, well, and not that it's that she, she is awo, she is a foreigner.

Verse six. And the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, oh, she's not an Israelite. She is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. So there's Moabite and Moab twice, as if you didn't understand. She's a Moabite woman who came from Moab. Sort of repeating himself there.

You also get the sense here that the reality of her foreign status is something that the writer has front and center. Again, the brackets, the point, the larger point is to just take notice. This is a section that wants you to see she is a foreigner. She is from a foreign land. Everything about her status is She's not one of us.

So twice, she's this young, she's the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab, or seven. She said, this is still the foreman's speaking. She said, please let me glean and gather among the she, sheaves after the reapers. So now we want to begin seeing what I think is the point, not only of chapter two, but one of the central points of the rest of the book.

And that's this, that we're being shown here a picture. We're going to see in Boaz a picture of God, a picture of Messiah, a picture of Redeemer. And I know that shocks no one because you've read the story and you've seen for yourself that Boaz is a picture of God. of the Redeemer. He's a picture of the Christ to come.

And furthermore, that's something that we see frequently in the Old Testament. We see types of Christ or those who are like Christ in certain ways. David was like Christ because he was Israel's greatest king. Solomon was like Christ because he was the wisest of all. Whoever lived, Moses was like Christ because he was the mediator.

He was the lawgiver. Abraham was like Christ in his faith. And we could go on and on. And so we're accustomed to seeing people in the Old Testament who are like Christ. And we've seen that in Boaz. And we'll see that more plainly as we go on. But we also see another picture in chapter two. And that's the picture of Ruth, who is a picture of the church.

Boaz is a picture of Messiah. Ruth is a picture of the church. We already saw that in chapter one, Ruth, who left everything, who left her people. She left her gods. She left her security. She left her identity. She left everything and clung to the God of Naomi. That's a picture of. Conversion. That's a picture of the church.

She comes into Bethlehem into the joyful harvest celebration, which is a picture of the sinner who leaves their foreign gods and enters into the joyful people of God. So Ruth is a picture of the church. So we're going to see as we walk through this, how she is a more complete picture of the church. She is in fact, ironically, she will be a picture of virtue, which is ironic because She's a Moabitess.

Remember how we talked about the Moabite women were in the ancient world. They were the stereotypical loose women. They were widely known for their sexual deviancy. They were widely known for their promiscuity. They were widely known for their hollow tree. And yet here is a Moabitess who is going to be shown as the pitcher of virtue.

So let's see this. Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the reapers. Notice how she asks. And that's an excellent translation. She asks in a very submissive way, may I please glean in this field? Now she has a right to glean. In fact, she has a double right to glean because the gleanings.

are specifically Leviticus 19. They are specifically for the widow and the foreigner, of which she's both, plus the fact that she's poor. So in a sense, she's triply worthy of gleaning. And it's not something that she technically has to ask for. It's something that God mandated in his law. Nevertheless, notice this about the character of Ruth.

She is not presumptuous. She does not come and say, it's my right to glean. Now, make sure you leave corners for me. Make sure you don't go back over and pick up the things that you drop, because it's my right to have those. Those belong to me, says God. Instead, she asks in a submissive type of way. This is something that the New Testament Calls meekness.

Meekness is the character trait, is the character quality in which one does not stand upon one's rights. One does not demand what they deserve. Instead, for the good of another, they submit. You

see, and so that is the only description in all the Bible of the heart of Jesus is when he describes his own heart to say, I am meek.

I am one that who does not stand upon my rights. It is my right for everyone in my presence to drop to their faces and worship me. Yet I do not stand upon that right. I willingly give it up. Ruth is something of the same nature here, which she says it's it's my right to glean from the field. We're hungry Naomi and I we have nothing to eat.

This is all we've got to eat and it's our right Instead she comes in the submissive way, please. She's not presuming upon anything Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the Reapers So she came, and she has continued from early morning until now, except for a short rest. So she came early morning, she's been working all day, there's this phrase, except for a short rest.

That is, not only notoriously difficult to translate, many commentators, Of which they are much more knowledgeable in the Hebrew than myself. Many commentators say this is a phrase that's virtually impossible to translate. We really are only taking a guess at what the phrase means. The best guess is something like this.

Something to the effect that she's been working all day and she just took a short break. Literally what it says is, is her abode is here in the field and her house is little to her. Literally that's what it says. So you can figure that out on your, on your own. But the best guess is She's been working hard all day.

She's only taking just a short break, but instead, verse 8, Then Boaz said to Ruth, now listen my daughter, you begin to hear sort of this endearing My daughter that speaks of something that probably is speaking of a difference in age But also it's an endearing sort of term. It's an affectionate sort of term Listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women.

That verb translated keep close is the same one translated in chapter one when Ruth, when we're told that Ruth cleaves to Naomi, that's the same verb that we saw. Remember in Genesis chapter two, verse 24, and a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife or hold fast to his wife.

Same verb here. Hold fast, cleave to my young women. Don't leave this field. So you hear the Redeemer speaking to the church. Don't leave the field of the Redeemer. Don't leave the fields that are your Redeemer's field. Stay here. Cleave to this. Stay in the field of your Redeemer. You begin now to see Boaz as not just provider, But Protector, he's going to be even more prominently the Protector in just a few more sentences.

But you begin to see him as Provider and Protector. Stay in this field. It's as though you, Ruth, have found the field of great price. You've found the pearl of great price in the field. You've sold everything, you've bought the field. Now, Stay in that field, remain in that field with my, close to my young women.

Verse 9, let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to touch you? And when, and when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn. So, so he says to her, I have given orders that no one is to touch you, no one is to assault you.

We'll talk about that a little bit more as we go a little bit further, but he issues this protective order. This woman, Ruth, is under my protection. No one is to touch her. So you begin to see here. Boaz is protector and provider. That is something that not only do we see, of course, in Messiah as protector and provider, but that is also something that God has built into the heart of every male.

Every male in existence is created in the image of God, has something deep within our heart that tells us, We are to be protector and provider. And so if you are a person who has a young male in your life, a young man in your life, in any sort of age category, then just bear in mind that that is something to encourage.

That's something to promote, to encourage, to nurture that sense of you are protector, you are provider. It is your role to protect the women in your life. So he says, I've charged the young men not to touch you. And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn. Now, this is spectacular.

This is fantastic to see because What we see here is an incredible reversal of roles. Here we see the wealthy landowner Israelite man drawing water for the poor widow foreign woman. It didn't work that way in ancient Israel society. The men didn't draw water for the women. Do you remember Jesus at the well?

When he asks the Samaritan woman to draw water for him? The men didn't draw water. Instead. The men are drawing water for Ruth. And not only that, but the Israelite men are drawing water for the foreign woman. Do you see the flip flop here? Do you see the reversal? Do you see how Boaz is taking the societal order and flipping it on its head?

And he's showing to Ruth such a measure of acceptance and such a measure of kindness to say, Water will be provided for you. You don't need to draw your own water. You don't need to stop your gleaning to go and draw water. Neither do you have to bring skins of water with you. It will be provided for you because we're drawing water and giving it to you.

Maybe in your mind, maybe in the back of your mind, you're picturing Perhaps another conversation that took place between another man and another woman about drawing water and maybe you're seeing Maybe some threads of connection there But here's the other thing to see as he says water will be provided for you Let's not forget what they are just coming out of a ten year famine now what causes ten year famines?

Famines can be caused by things such as insects. We think about the story, in, in the pro, in the minor prophets in which, the, the locusts come and devour the crops. Nah that's, that's the name I was searching for, the story of the locusts who come and devour the crops. And so. Famines can occur from pestilence, but a 10-year famine comes from drought.

This is a time in which water is not only precious, water was always precious in the ancient world, but this is a time in which water was like gold, because they're just now coming out of a famine. And here's Boaz saying, We will provide water. water for you. Think of your, of your savior, of your Messiah saying, come to me.

I am the fountain of living water. He who drinks from my fountain will never thirst again. Those are the images that we are to see. That's the connections that we're to make. So he says, let your eyes

be on the field where they are reaping and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to touch you?

So anything could happen in a field in the ancient world. Same thing is true today, but much more so in the ancient world in which the system of laws. There were policemen, there were, safety phones for people to call and emergency people to come out and help people in trouble. Anything could happen in a field.

Think of Genesis chapter 4. What happened in a field in Genesis chapter 4? A man lost his life because his brother hit him on the head with a rock. So anything could happen. Boaz is being practical. He's being knowledgeable. He's saying, listen, we don't want anything. I'm the provider. Nothing's going to happen to you.

You are under my protection now. Verse 10, and she fell on her face, bowing to the ground. That's the word for worship. So here we're beginning to see there's something about Boaz that's pointing us to something beyond just a man. Ruth falls before him, the same word for worship. And she said to him, why have I found favor in your eyes that you should take notice of me since I am a foreigner?

There's a little play on words there. The word for foreigner in Hebrew is literally. One who cannot be recognized. So she says, How have you or why have you to have favor upon me? One who cannot be recognized? Why have you recognized one who cannot be recognized? Sort of a little bit of a Hebrew play on words there.

But she says to him, Why have I found this favor? You see, you hear in her words there, this sense of surprise, of astonishment, that she is the object of favor, not only of the blessing, People of God, the Reapers, who will be generous to her, and Naomi and the others of the village. But this man, Boaz, of the incredible generosity, and her astonishment, her surprise.

Why am I the object of such favor? So again, you're hearing echoes of the church. This is the voice of the church saying, Why have we found favor with God? Why has God been favorable to us? Why has he shown grace to us? We who deserve nothing but condemnation and damnation yet. He has been loving and faithful to us How can that be?

You hear there the echoes of the church, but 11 verse, verse 11, but Boaz answered her all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me. There's the, there's the second double verb fully told to me. So literally being told to me, it was told to me.

Emphasizing here, the telling the hearing of the story of Ruth and her leaving her family, leaving her home and coming home. With her mother-in-law and how well she's treated her mother-in-law. So, in other words, what Boaz is saying is, I didn't just hear this once. In fact, I didn't just hear it twice.

This is the talk of the town. Everywhere I go, I hear people talking about Ruth the Mole Bites. I go down to the market, And people are talking about Ruth. I go over here to synagogue. People are talking about Ruth. I go to the fields. People are talking about Ruth. It's as though Boaz is saying everybody in Bethlehem is talking about this.

It has been fully told to me how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people you did not know before you hear there, of course. Ruth is the picture of the church, and so you hear there the streams of thought. She left her native land, she left her father, she left her mother, she left everything, just as the Christian leaves everything to follow him.

Just as Jesus will say, the one who puts his hand to the plow, or who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not worthy of me, or the one who does not hate father and mother is not worthy of me, or as Jesus will say in Mark's Gospel, you must deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me. This is what we see in Ruth.

Boaz has heard this, that she's left everything, she's denied herself, she's left that behind, and she has come with Naomi to this land of Yahweh. Verse 12, The Lord repay you for what you have done, and full reward be given to you by the Lord. There's another verse. Play on words there because the word repay and the word reward are both Derivatives of the word Shalom or peace So do we can just recognize that and keep going so the Lord repay you and a full reward be given you by the Lord Says Boaz the God of Israel under whose wings you have come to take refuge Now this metaphor, this picture, begins to really take shape as Boaz describes Ruth's coming to the land of Israel as coming under their protective wings of a mother bird.

Often in the Old Testament, God's protection for his people, God's care for his people is described in terms just like that. The carrying wings of a mother bird. Take a look with me in your notes at, Deuteronomy chapter 34 and verse 11, like an eagle that stirs up its nest that flutters over its young spreading out its wings and catching them, bearing them up on its pinions or Exodus chapter 19, you yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles wings and brought you to myself is this picture of a mother bird on the nest and there's little baby birds and she spreads her wings in protection over those baby birds and of course, yeah.

Who can forget Jesus's words? To Jerusalem, old Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often I would have gathered you as a mother hen under her wings, but you would not. And so we see here the imagery. He says to Ruth, you've come under the protective wings. You've taken refuge under the wings of Yahweh. Verse 13. And she said, and the following here in the ESV is put as a statement, but I think it's probably more appropriate as a question.

So, so she asked, How have I found favor in your eyes, my Lord? For you have comforted me. How is this that I have found such favor? You hear again her astonishment. One such as me, a foreigner, a widow from a foreign land, a land of Moabite, nonetheless. How have I found such favor in your eyes? For you have comforted me.

That word comfort. Literally means taking a deep breath after a period of having your breath constrained. Isn't that a, a, just a descriptive word picture? The ability to take a deep breath After a period of not being able to breathe, like something's constraining your breath, something's holding your breath.

You're not able to breathe deeply, but then whatever it is, it's taken off. Maybe somebody's holding a bag over your head and you can't hardly breathe and then they take it off and your breath of fresh air comes in. That's the word comfort. In the Hebrew, and it carries with it the sense that there was something constraining life, something constraining the breath I need.

And the comfort is when that's taken away. And now I can breathe. Ruth couldn't breathe. She was coming to the land, a new land of new people. And new faces and new customs. And can you imagine just how her heart was in her throat? And she didn't know what was awaiting her. She didn't know what would happen to her.

She didn't know if she would have a place to sleep. She didn't know if she'd have anything to eat. And now, yes, he is now providing for me. I have somehow been being provided for what a comfort you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant though i am not one of your servants she recognizes i'm not your family i'm not your clan you owe me no kindness and yet you have shown tremendous kindness again it reminds us of the christian who says to our messiah I was not your child.

I was not your brother. I was your enemy and you made me your brother. You took me into your family. You adopted me as your own when I was not your own. She has no standing. She has nothing to stand on. No standing. And she comes to the one who has standing. Remember Boaz, a worthy man. He's a man of standing.

He's a man of reputation. He's a man of influence. Ruth has none of that. She has no influence. She has no standing. She comes as one with no standing to the one who has standing and the one who has standing like a loving mother bird puts his wings over her to comfort, protect, and provide for her. It's a beautiful picture of the sinner coming into the fold of the family of God.

Now, verse 14, and at mealtime. Boaz said to her come here and eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine. So she sat beside the Reapers and he passed to her roasted grain and she ate until she was Satisfied and had some left over. Now the level of kindness really just goes to another level because here is the foreign widow Moabitess Who is now not only eating at table with the owner of the field, but you see that phrase he passed to her.

That's a word in the Hebrew that has a strong connotations of serving with your hands of literally. Like in the New Testament, we think of the word deacon, one who serves or waits tables with their hands. The same word in the Hebrew has this connotation of serving one with one's hands. And it, and it speaks of, of a servile attitude.

So here we see Ruth, not just sharing table. So there's all the images there of table fellowship, sharing table together. And we think here of, of the, the imagery of sharing table with our Lord, the Lord's table. We think of the marriage supper. We think of all those things, not only that imagery, but also the imagery of the Lord of the harvest serving, not just the reaper, the gleaner.

And we become overwhelmed here with just the. colorful, full color pictures of our Messiah. We think of Jesus with the waistcloth and the, and the bucket of the bowl of water, washing disciples feet. We think of Jesus cooking breakfast, the risen Christ cooking breakfast on the beach. We think of the marriage supper in which the lamb serves the ones at table.

And we see this picture of Boaz Serving Ruth and we say this is unmistakable. How can anyone mistake that this is a picture of Messiah and his church, his bride as he serves her? Now, you also, you can't miss this. She ate until she was satisfied and had some left over. It wasn't just minimal portions.

Instead, she ate, she was fully satisfied. Some was left over. Verse 15. When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men saying, let her glean even among the sheaves and do not reproach her. Or in other words, do not embarrass her. Do not humiliate her. This is a humiliating thing to do, to glean among the reapers.

And he says, don't embarrass her. In other words, in the kingdom of God, there are no second class citizens. There are none in the kingdom who hold a position lower than others so that they should be humiliated or embarrassed in front of others. Instead, he says, do not reproach her, verse 16, and also pull out some of the bundles for her.

So there we see our third double verb. Pulling out, pull out. He doubles the verb to put heavy emphasis on the pulling out of sheaves that are already bundled up together. In other words, Boaz says don't just leave the the stalks that you drop behind. Take some of the ones that you've already gathered up, pull them out and pretend like you dropped them.

So that she has even more to collect. You see the kindness, the generosity of Boaz is just overflowing you. The extraordinary kindness of Boaz. So let's pause right there and let's ask ourselves, Why is Boaz so kind? Why is Boaz being so generous? Is it just that he is a kind hearted man, and this is who he is?

I think that there is certainly truth to that. But is there more here? Is there some reason that Boaz is being extraordinarily empathetic to Ruth? And I think that there is a reason, and I think that reason is his heritage. You see in these scriptures, particularly the Old Testament scriptures, is very significant.

Where someone comes from, what tribe they belong to, who their parents were, who their lineages. In fact, when we read the Old Testament, there, there are no characters of any importance in the Old Testament of which we don't know something about where they came from, except for one. That would be, of course, Melchizedek and story in Genesis, Melchizedek and Abraham.

But aside from Melchizedek, everyone in the Old Testament who is of any significance, we know something about where they came from. Even if you think about Elijah. Think about Elijah and how it was significant that we knew so little about him, but we still knew something. We still knew he was from Tishbe.

Instead, we now look at this man, Boaz, and now we ask ourselves, where did Boaz come from? And we find when we turn to the New Testament, to Matthew chapter 1 in verse 5, we find that Boaz was the grandson of Rahab. And we remember the story of Rahab. From Joshua chapter two, Rahab was the Canaanite harlot who lived in the wall of the city of Jericho.

And as the army was about to invade, she was the one who met with the spies and, and, and, and believed upon Yahweh and agreed to turn the city over to them. And she was protected. And then we're told later on in the book of Joshua, how she became part of Israel. She was incorporated into Israel. And then the writer to the Hebrews in Hebrews chapter 11, Praises the faith of Rahab.

So think about who Rahab was. She was a foreign woman who was an outcast. She was a prostitute who was grafted into the people of God. If there's anyone who knew how Ruth felt, it was Rahab. And so I just in my mind, I just picture Boaz, as a 5, 6, 7, 8 year old boy with Grandma Rahab. And it

wasn't like that Boaz every other weekend would go see Grandma Rahab because in those days, of course, Extended families live together.

So it was more like every day Boaz saw grandma Rahab. And I just imagine what, what do you think Rahab never got over? How the people of God treated a foreign pagan and just what that meant to her? To be grafted into Israel. And to be accepted as an Israelite and to be cared for, not just her, but her. And you remember the story, her and her family.

And if there's anyone in all the land of Israel who knew what Ruth felt like, it was Rahab. And I think perhaps Boaz grew up hearing that and hearing that from his grandmother had a soft place in his heart. for the foreign gentile woman who was the outcast. And maybe something about Ruth reminds him of Grandma Rahab.

I don't know. But it certainly seems like that is not coincidence that the grandson of Rahab would also be one who was so welcoming to the foreign Gentile woman, making both Rahab and Ruth part of the genealogy of the Messiah who was to come. Now verse 17. So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what had been she had gleaned and it was about an ephah of barley.

So she she gleaned in the fields all day from sunup to sundown then after that she beat out what she had gleaned or she Threshed it meaning that she beat it on the ground or threw it into the air or combination of that in which the the the stalks and the And the husks and the hull are blown away.

And what's left is just the seed, just the kernel. And what was gleaned, we're told is an ephah, about an ephah of barley. An ephah, of course, that's not a term that we are accustomed to using, but an ephah is about, a little bit better than half of a bushel. So if you've ever snapped peas or, Or, shelled peas, snapped, snapped beans or anything like that, then you, you're familiar with what a bushel, what a bushel looks like, about a little bit over half of a bushel, or to put it in more modern, day vernacular, it would have filled a five gallon bucket and a little bit more, just a, a five gallon bucket almost would hold it, so remember it's not the stalks, and it's not the hulls, this is just now the kernels, just a little bit over a five gallon bucket, Bye bye.

Would have been about 30 pounds of grain, which was quite a bit of grain. We're told that in the ancient world, most people subsisted on about one pound of grain per day. So this would have been about a month's. worth of food for one person that she now carries back. Verse 18. She took it up and went into the city.

Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also brought out and gave her what food she had left over after being satisfied. So she's keeping nothing for herself. She's sharing everything, even the leftovers. She could have easily kept those in her dress. Or under her clothing and kept them for herself.

Remember, they've been starving. They are, they are coming. There's been this famine. They have not had abundant food. She could easily just keep this for herself, but she doesn't. She shares everything and she comes and as she comes carrying this, this Five gallon bucket of grain. Imagine Naomi's thoughts.

She hasn't seen or heard from Ruth all day. She didn't get any text messages from her. She didn't check up on social media. She's heard nothing from Ruth all day and here she sees her coming. She doesn't know if maybe she's gonna be coming with just a little meager handful that maybe they could make a couple of cakes with or maybe nothing and here she comes with these 30 pounds of grain verse 19 and her mother-in-law said to her.

Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? She's sort of stumbling over herself in her excitement. Where did you glean? Where did you work blessed? Be the man who took notice of you She told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said the man's name with whom I work today is Boaz.

So the writer there takes the word Boaz and puts it at the end of the sentence, which is taken out of its normal word order in order that the reader would read it just like that. Sort of a pause, a pause for emphasis. It's like the reader wants you to hear in your mind, Ruth saying this, the man's name with whom I work today is

Sort of the suspenseful pause, so to speak. And verse 20, And Naomi said to her daughter in law, May he be blessed by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead, meaning his kindness is extended to you and I, plus Our dead husbands and your dead brother in law, Naomi also said to her, the man is a close relative of ours.

One of our redeemers or your translation might say kinsmen redeemers. The word there is Goel. Now a Goel in the Old Testament is a term that is used widely in the Old Testament. It's often used of God, but it's used here in the sense of a redeemer who is a Now, this person in the Old Testament is always a kin's person.

There's always a relationship by blood. And the idea behind the Goel in the Old Testament is always the idea that it is the obligation of the redeemer to buy back or buy out of some difficult situation. A relative of theirs to deliver from some difficult circumstances, a blood relative. That's always the idea.

And in the Old Testament, there are four principal obligations of the Redeemer. They are, you can see these in your notes and you can chase down the scriptures on your own later if you want to just verify these, but you see the four obligations of a Redeemer. Number one, they are obligated to buy family members out of slavery or bondage.

So if someone falls into debt, they're unable to pay their debts. And in order to pay their debts, they sell themselves into bondage. Then the Redeemer's obligation is to buy the family member out of bondage. Number two, they are obligated to buy back land that someone of their relatives has sold outside the clan.

You remember how The Old Testament is very specific that these allotments of land are to remain among these certain clans and among these certain tribes, where there will be times in which a piece of land, a property of land was sold outside the tribe or outside the land. It was the Redeemer's obligation.

to buy that land back into the tribe. Number three, if a female of the clan is widowed without an heir, the Redeemer is obligated to marry her. And then number four, the Redeemer is obligated to

act as the avenger of blood on the behalf of kin's people who are mistreated or abused. And so there you see the four obligations in the scripture of the Bible.

The Redeemer, as we see in the Old Testament. Now, we also see that this idea of Goel in the Old Testament is not only used for people who are the Redeemers of kinsfolk, but it is also used, of course, to speak of the Redeemer, of the Lord, who is our Redeemer. We see examples of this in your notes. If you want to look, In your notes, under Job chapter 19, verses 25 and verse 26, we know these words.

I know that my Redeemer, my Goel, lives there. Job is calling Yahweh his Goel, his Redeemer, his relative that buys one out of difficult circumstances, that redeems one out of difficult circumstances. Psalm 19 and verse 14, let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in your sight.

Oh, Lord, my rock and my redeemer, my kinsman who buys me out of difficult situations. Exodus five and verse 22, we see God describing his work as redeemer to redeem his people out of slavery in Egypt. Many more references that we could look at, but just one final thing to look at is of course, Christ. In Luke chapter four, who begins his ministry by saying, I am here to do the work of Redeemer.

I am here to proclaim liberty to the captives. I am here to set at liberty those who are oppressed. I'm here to do the work of the Redeemer. And then as we looked at some weeks ago in Mark 10 Jesus says, I didn't come to be served, but to serve and to give my life as a ransom for many. In other words, he's saying my life is the ransom price.

For my work as Redeemer to redeem my people, my kins folk out of difficult circumstances. So we see here the Old Testament's view that God is the Goel, but then there are also humans that serve in this type of role as Boaz is doing here. But then lastly, let's just see how it is that all four of these obligations of the Redeemer, all four of these are fulfilled in Christ.

Number one, the Redeemer has the obligation to buy his family members out of slavery. Christ has also bought us out of our slavery. Galatians chapter 5 and verse 1, For freedom Christ has set you free. The one who them sons sets free is free indeed. And we have freedom in his words and freedom in his forgiveness.

He has purchased us from our bondage to slavery. Number two, the, the redeemer is obligated to buy back the land of the people that has been sold outside of their family. Christ also has given his life in order to purchase for us. Our metaphorical land, our inheritance, so to speak, 15, therefore, he's the mediator of a new covenant so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.

Or we see first Peter chapter one, how we have this inheritance that is laid up for us or Romans chapter eight and verse 17, that if we are children, we are also heirs of the kingdom and we could go on. Christ has bought back the land, the inheritance for his people. Number three, the Redeemer is obligated to marry a widow who does not have a male heir.

Christ also has married, so to speak, the widow, the orphan, and taken us as his own, as his own brother, as his own bride. Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 5, he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ. According to the purpose of his will, Ephesians two and verse

19. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and the members of the household of God.

We who were outcast and without a people have been made his people. He has metaphorically married the widow who did not have an heir. Lastly, the Redeemer is obligated to avenge the wrongs that have been done to his family members. Christ, we are told, will certainly avenge all the wrongs, all the blood that has been spilled of his people.

We see in Revelation chapter 6 and verse 10, the martyrs are crying out, when will you avenge our blood? And there are just simply too many references in the book of Revelation. There's literally about a third of the book of Revelation is about the fulfillment of that when the king of kings will avenge the blood of his people.

So on all four counts, Christ is the fulfillment of the Goel, of the Redeemer. Now verse 21 and Ruth the Moabite, there's the other end of the bracket, Ruth the Moabite said, besides, he said to me, you shall keep close to my young men until they have finished all my harvest. And Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that you go out with these young women, lest, in another field, So there's verification that the threat was a real threat.

Boaz wasn't just making it up. Stay with my people so that you stay safe. It was a real threat of possible assault. Naomi verifies it. Now verse 23.

And she lived with her mother-in-law. The last thing to say about this chapter is this. Why does it end on such an odd note? Such a, such a chapter of just triumphant kindness, of exceeding abundant grace and favor and the gleaning and the harvest and everything. And it ends with, And she lived with her mother-in-law.

I think it ends that way simply to say this. Ruth was faithful to her vow. Ruth's ship seems to be coming in. She has now connected with the leading man of the town. And she could very easily just move on along. But instead she vowed to Naomi. I will stay with you. I will be buried beside you. Even in the next life, I will not leave you.

Your people are my people. Your God is my God. Amen. I will not leave you. And so here's this confirmation. Even when the circumstances change for Ruth, even when things are now looking up and she no longer needs Naomi, she still continued to be faithful and to live with Naomi, what a picture of the church, but what a more colorful and three-dimensional picture of the Messiah who is redeemer and there's more to come.