

## RUTH IS NOTICED – PART 2

--RUTH 2:1-23--

### INTRODUCTION:

Chapter two opened by introducing us to a new character in the history of Naomi and Ruth, this new person is a kinsman or relative of Naomi's deceased husband, Elimelech. We learned that he was a man of great wealth and that his name was Boaz.

After being introduced to Boaz, the author returns us to Naomi and Ruth who have settled into Bethlehem, but they need food and Ruth ask Naomi if she can go out into the fields and glean barley. Naomi tells her to go and as the author writes, Ruth's chance chanced to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz. We learned that this was not simply a stroke of luck for Ruth, but as we will see this morning even more clearly that this was the providence of God. For those who put their trust in the LORD there is nothing that happens by chance, what happens to us happens by divine appointment, not by accident or luck. This morning we will move on in this chapter to see what happens as Ruth gleans in the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.

### III. BOAZ NOTICES (Ruth 2:4-7)

- a. Verse four opens with the words "Now \_\_\_\_\_..." shifting our attention from Ruth to Boaz.
- b. As Boaz looks over his field and what has been accomplished, he notices a \_\_\_\_\_ gleaner who has not been here before, a stranger.
- c. Boaz seeks to find out who this young \_\_\_\_\_ is that is gleaning in his field, and he turns to his foreman, the servant who was in charge of the reapers.
- d. The foreman's response gives us information that we know about \_\_\_\_\_ and possibly that Boaz had heard, but had not yet seen the woman.
- e. Boaz is given a lot to \_\_\_\_\_ about here.
- f. There is just one problem, and it is a serious problem for the man who \_\_\_\_\_ to please God. The problem is Ruth's ethnicity. (Deuteronomy 23:3-6)

### IV. BOAZ REACTS (Ruth 2:8-16)

- a. Boaz does not seem to hesitate but goes immediately to \_\_\_\_\_ to Ruth.
- b. Boaz says \_\_\_\_\_ things to Ruth initially.
- c. Ruth responds to this \_\_\_\_\_ by bowing down with her face to the ground before Boaz.
- d. Boaz continues to dignify \_\_\_\_\_ by responding to her question.
- e. Boaz then speaks to Ruth of \_\_\_\_\_, that the LORD repay her for the kindness that she has shown to Naomi.
- f. Ruth responds again to Boaz in verse 13, "*Then she said, 'I have found \_\_\_\_\_ 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.'*" (Ruth 2:13, NASB95)
- g. Ruth gives two reasons in this verse for her \_\_\_\_\_.
- h. So how was it that Boaz could \_\_\_\_\_ showing kindness and offering protection to Ruth since she was a Moabitess?

### CONCLUSION:

In our passage this morning there is a great lesson for us. The lesson is that applying God's Word to the messy business of life requires great wisdom. All of it is inspired by God and carries the stamp of His authority. So, all of it is to be honored and obeyed. However, treating it as a set of absolute rules that must all be applied in the same direct way in every situation, regardless of the intention behind them or the complexities of particular cases, simply will not do. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and scribes of His day for failing to distinguish between the lesser and greater matters of the Law, magnifying the lesser and neglecting the greater. (Matthew 23:23) The result of how the Pharisees kept the Law was a harsh legalism that failed to express as Jesus said the divine concern for justice and compassion that was the real heart of the Law and lay behind all the commandments. The truth is that the ban on Moabites was given to prevent Israel from ever again being harmed by Moab, or seduced into worshiping its gods. It was never intended to exclude someone like

Ruth who had abandoned those gods and taken refuge in the LORD, any more than the ban on the Canaanites was intended to exclude the harlot Rahab, who was in awe of Israel's God and decided to cast her lot with Him and His people. If proof is needed, it is found in the way Ruth and Rahab are both included in the genealogy of Jesus that opens the New Testament in Matthew 1:1-16! The way that the history of Ruth ends, as we will see, with blessing upon blessing, leaves us in no doubt that Boaz was a lawkeeper, not a lawbreaker. In Ruth's case he was absolutely right in letting his concern for the poor, the alien, and the widow take precedence over the ban on Moabites. This is something that we as followers of Christ need to note very carefully. We are right to honor the Bible as the inspired Word of God and make it the final authority and judge of our beliefs and practices. But we too, need discernment in knowing how to apply it to the complexities of life, lest we make the same mistake the Pharisees and scribes did and end up out of step with God whose Word it is. May God grant us discernment.