

## Lesson 91 Ruth Meets Boaz

## **Story Elements**

• Text: Ruth 1:19-2:23

• Setting: circa 1100 B.C. in Bethlehem

• Main Characters: God, Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi

• Plot: Naomi.

<ul> <li>Key word(s):</li> </ul>	•	Key	word	(s)	:	
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• Climax: Ruth 2:5 Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?

## From Beautiful to Bitter

- 1. (1:19) Upon returning to Bethlehem, the whole city was astir with news that Naomi was back from Moab.
  - a. *Is this Naomi?* The townspeople were shocked, not only by Naomi's return, but also by her \_\_\_\_\_\_. Evidently, ten years of struggle and tragedy had taken their toll on her countenance.
  - b. (1:20) *Call me not Naomi, call me Mara*. Her sufferings had caused her to feel like her name should be changed from Naomi, which means beautiful, to Mara, which means bitter.

APPLICATION→ Naom	i was bitter in the sense that her life had soured because of her family's departure from
God's revealed will an	d the ensuing family deaths that she interpreted as God's angry providence. But Naomi
was not bitter against	God. This is important. Though our lives be imbittered under God's chastisement, our
hearts should remain	as we trust in God's holy wisdom and faithful love. We can see such a
disposition in Naomi's	imploring of the LORD for blessing. (cf. 1:8,9; 2:20)

## From Moab's Country to Bethlehem's Fields

- 2. (1:22-2:3) Having resettled in Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest<sup>1</sup> (cf. 1:22), Ruth seeks out a means to provide food for her and Naomi.
  - a. Ruth hoped to find a generous landowner that would allow her to glean after the \_\_\_\_\_\_. "The right of gleaning was conferred by a positive law on the widow, the poor, and the stranger (see on Le 19:9 and De 24:19). But liberty to glean *behind the reapers* [Ru 2:3] was not a right that could be claimed; it was a privilege granted or refused according to the good will or favor of the owner."<sup>2</sup>
  - b. It so happened that Ruth was generously allowed to glean in the field of Boaz, who was a wealthy man and a kinsman of Naomi's husband.

APPLICATION → Matthew Henry notes, "God wisely orders small events; and those that seem altogether contingent serve his own \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ of his people. Many a great affair is brought about by a little turn, which seemed fortuitous to us, but was directed by Providence with design."<sup>3</sup>

- 3. (2:4-7) Coming from town to check on the progress of the harvest, Boaz took notice of Ruth and inquired of her with his foreman, who said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab.
  - a. (2:8-9) Boaz told Ruth to stay in his field for all her gleaning activities. He also provided her with victuals and guaranteed her .
  - b. (2:10) Ruth was humbled by Boaz's care and generosity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> On our calendar, this would be near the end of March.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 174.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Matthew Henry, Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 376.

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4.	<ul> <li>(2:11-16) Boaz explained to Ruth that he had heard of the Moabitess that was loyal to her mother-in-law and who had left Moab to follow the LORD God of Israel. Boaz's kindness did not stop at his words:</li> <li>a. (2:14) He invited Ruth to eat with his own field servants and gave her parched (roasted oats).</li> <li>b. (2:15-16) He instructed the workers to allow to Ruth to glean among the bundled sheaves and to also leave handfuls of 4 for her to gather.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>(2:17-18) Ruth's went home that evening with an ephah<sup>5</sup> of barley and plenty of leftover parched corn for Naomi to eat.</li> <li>a. (2:19) Amazed at Ruth's abundant efforts, she inquired as to whose field she had gleaned, and upon hearing that it was Boaz's property, she exclaimed, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the</li> <li>b. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen. By kinsmen is meant (Heb: goel). The kinsmen redeemer was a near relative who was responsible for the protection of family property and continuance (Deu. 25:5-10).</li> <li>c. (2:22) It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field. Naomi wisely advise Ruth to glean only in Boaz's field, lest she make it appear that she was unappreciative of his generosity and singular care.</li> </ul>
ec ts f	PLICATION → "Our blessed Saviour is our <i>Goel;</i> it is he that has a right to If we expect to eive benefit by him, let us closely adhere to him, and his fields, and his family; let us not go to the world and fields for that which is to be had with him only, and which he has encouraged us to expect from him. Has the d dealt bountifully with us? Let us not be found in any other field, nor seek for happiness and satisfaction in creature."
	wer Key: Key word(s): kinsman • 1. a. appearance; → sweet • 2. a. reapers; → glory, good • 3. a. safety; → aliens • 4. a. corn; b. pose • 5. a. dead; b. redeemer; → redeem
Bv	which is meant that they should purposefully drop some harvested barley for her.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> By which is meant that they should purposefully drop some harvested barley for her.
<sup>5</sup> About 22 liters or "three-fifths of a bushel, which was enough to sustain two women for about five days." James M. Freeman and Harold J. Chadwick, Manners & Customs of the Bible (North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos Publishers, 1998), 201.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Henry, 377.