

BIBLE BRIEFING

“Grace Land”

RUTH Chapter 2

Introduction

Ruth's own words are the clue that unlocks the message of Chapter Two for us. One word in particular is important. Three times she uses the word *favor*, in verses two, ten, and thirteen:

Ruth 2:2 So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, “Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after *him* in whose sight I may find **favor**.”
And she said to her, “Go, my daughter.”

Ruth 2:10 So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, “Why have I found **favor** in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I *am* a foreigner?”

Ruth 2:13 Then she said, “Let me find **favor** in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants.”

The word translated *favor* is the word normally translated *grace*. The KJV uses the more familiar word *grace* in verses two and ten. God the Holy Spirit is calling our attention to the grace of God operating in Ruth's life. In Chapter One, Ruth had been *saved* by depending upon grace; now, in Chapter Two, she was to *serve* depending upon grace.

Ruth had been saved by depending upon grace. God's Law strictly excluded Moabites from the congregation of Israel:

Deuteronomy 23:3 "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever,

In light of this restriction against Moabites, how can you explain Ruth the Moabite's determination to turn to God? Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever

you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God." You can only explain it by Ruth looking behind and beyond God's Law to God's love and depending upon His grace to save her.

Ruth served depending upon grace. Chapter Two revolves around her *expecting* and *experiencing* grace as she served in the field.

Like Ruth, you were saved by depending upon grace. In Ephesians 2:8 you read,

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

Like Ruth, you are also to serve depending upon grace:

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

Having been saved by grace, how do you serve depending upon grace? Look at Ruth: Every day she went forth into the field expecting and experiencing grace. In her three exclamations about grace, in verses two, ten, and thirteen, you have a teaching about your own going forth each day into your "field," expecting and experiencing grace.

#1 Go Forth Each Day Seeking
Grace In Your Lord's Field
(v1-3)

As Chapter One ended, Naomi had returned to Bethlehem, bringing her daughter-in-law, Ruth, with her. Both of them had been widowed in Moab. Their only hope of making a living in Israel was for Ruth to glean behind the reapers during the barley harvest.

Ruth 2:1 There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz.

Ruth 2:2 So Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."

Ruth 2:3 Then she left, and went 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 family of Elimelech.

Ruth went forth into the field. We commonly use the word "field" to indicate a persons employment, or to a specialized part of their employment. "Field" is a word that can describe any and every area of your life: your employment, your marriage, your family, and your Church fellowship. Think of your whole life as a land God has given you with many different and distinct fields that you go forth into each day.

We will see, in Chapters Three and Four, why it is so important to note that Boaz was a relative of Naomi's dead husband, Elimelech. His relationship to Naomi made him a near kinsman who could act as a redeemer of Elimelech's property.

Ruth went forth and "she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz." The KJV says "it was her hap" to come upon Boaz' field. From her point of view it was a coincidence; from God's point of view it was providence. Providence is God working in and through all that He has created to manage all things according to His own will. Providence means that there is no such thing as luck, chance, coincidence, or accident for the child of God. What appears to you to be luck, chance, coincidence, or accident is really God's sovereign providence.

It was Ruth's "hap" to go forth and glean in Boaz' field. By God's providence, she went forth into the field God had prepared beforehand for her. Just so, once you are a Christian, it is your "hap," when you go forth each day, to glean in your Lord's field. The field you find yourself in is, by God's providence, the field God has prepared beforehand for you. Ephesians 2:10 tells you that,

Ephesians 2:10 [you] are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that [you] should walk in them.

Jesus has "prepared beforehand" your good works. He has gone before you to make your way fruitful. In a sense, He is like the reaper, and you are like the gleaner. You are to follow Him through the various fields of your life, picking up the gleanings He has left for

you. Those gleanings are what you pick up from the Word of God in each and every field of your life:

1. Your marriage is the Lord's field... If you are married, there are fruitful gleanings scattered throughout the Word of God about your relationship as husbands and wives. You'd better follow Jesus and pick them up!
2. Your family is the Lord's field... If you have children, there are fruitful gleanings scattered throughout the Word of God about how to train your children. You'd better follow Jesus and pick them up!
3. Your employment is the Lord's field... If you have a job, there are fruitful gleanings scattered throughout the Word of God about your diligence as a workman. You'd better follow Jesus and pick them up!
4. Your Church fellowship is the Lord's field... Since you are a Christian, there are fruitful gleanings scattered throughout the Word of God about your faithfulness towards the fellowship of believers. You'd better follow Jesus and pick them up!

Ruth went forth into the field seeking to "glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find grace." She went forth seeking grace.

Is grace something that can be sought after? The writer to the Hebrew Christians thought it was. In Hebrews 4:16 you read,

[Hebrews 4:16](#) Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Once you are saved by grace you have the privilege of seeking grace for your daily life. You can come to God's throne seeking grace and you can be assured you will "find grace to help in time of need."

Beloved, you are *always* "in time of need!" There is never a time in your marriage, in your family, in your employment, or in your Church fellowship that you can do without grace.

Go forth each day seeking God's grace for every field of your life.

#2 Go Forth Each Day Surprised
By Grace In Your Lord's Field
(v4-13)

Ruth went forth seeking grace. When she found it, she was nevertheless surprised by it, exclaiming in verse ten, "Why have I found grace in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?"

Even as believers, God's grace should continually surprise us. He takes notice of us, even though we were once foreigners and aliens from His promises.

We want to see how Boaz treated Ruth with undeserved favor, surprising her. In this we will see how Jesus treats us with His undeserved favor, surprising us.

Boaz *sought* Ruth:

Ruth 2:4 Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you!" And they answered him, "The LORD bless you!"

Ruth 2:5 Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?"

Ruth 2:6 So the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered and said, "It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab.

Ruth 2:7 "And she said, 'Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house."

Boaz first sought after Ruth. It was Jesus Who, by grace, first sought after you to save you. After you are saved, Jesus still takes the initiative. Before you are even aware of His doing so, He gives you gifts by which you serve Him in grace. His sovereign gifting is always a surprise to me.

Boaz *spoke* to Ruth:

Ruth 2:8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women.

Ruth 2:9 "Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn."

It is somewhat surprising that the Lord of the field would speak to an impoverished gleaner. How much more surprising to think that the Lord Jesus, the Creator of fields and of the universe around them, should speak to you.

Boaz *summoned* Ruth to a reward:

Ruth 2:10 So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?"

Ruth 2:11 And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before.

Ruth 2:12 "The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge."

Ruth 2:13 Then she said, "Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants."

Ruth had faithfully served her mother-in-law. She was surprised that her faithful service had been noticed. Here she was, at the feet of Boaz, being rewarded for what seemed so insignificant to her.

Jesus will summon you to His reward! First Corinthians Three, and Second Corinthians Five, speak of your being summoned before the *Bema* of Christ to be rewarded for the works done in your body for the Lord. The rewards the Lord grants will surprise you since, like Ruth, your service seems so insignificant. You will be surprised when Jesus rewards you for those things He Himself enabled you to do. You will be surprised by grace.

You should go forth each day expecting grace. When you experience grace, it should nevertheless surprise you. You were a lowly foreigner, but Jesus sought you to make you His bride. He speaks to you; He will one day summon you to His reward.

#3 Go Forth Each Day Satisfied By Grace In Your Lord's Field (v14-23)

Notice how Boaz sees to it Ruth is satisfied:

Ruth 2:14 Now Boaz said to her at mealtime, "Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her; and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back.

Ruth 2:15 And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her.

Ruth 2:16 "Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her."

Ruth 2:17 So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.

Ruth 2:18 Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her what she had kept back after she had been satisfied.

Ruth 2:19 And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz."

Ruth 2:20 Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!" And Naomi said to her, "This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives."

Ruth 2:21 Ruth the Moabitess said, "He also said to me, 'You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'"

Ruth 2:22 And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field."

Ruth 2:23 So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.

There is a wonderful lesson in these verses. Ruth still goes forth each day into the field to glean. In one sense, her overall circumstances have not changed. She is still an impoverished widow who must work doubly hard to provide for her impoverished mother-in-law. She is still an alien and a stranger in Israel.

But in another sense, everything has changed! She is satisfied each day as her needs are met by the Lord of the field. She is on her way to being wed to this wonderful man.

You go forth each day into your "fields." In one sense, being a Christian doesn't change your circumstances. In some cases, being a Christian makes your circumstances worse than they were. You are every bit a foreigner an alien on earth. But in another sense, everything has changed because of your relationship to Jesus as Lord of your fields. He sees to it that you can be satisfied each day in each field. And you are on your way to a wedding; you are the bride of Jesus Christ!

Why are so many believers dissatisfied? The key is to look for satisfaction in your fields rather than looking to other fields. Ruth would only be satisfied if she gleaned in Boaz' field. All others held danger and discouragement for her.

Take your field of marriage for an example. Many believers want to glean in another field when it comes to marriage; many of them do. All fields other than your own marriage hold danger and discouragement for you.

You can apply this to all the other "fields" you are involved in. Glean only in the fields that it is your "hap" to be in. Often it is a lack of real commitment to your fields that blocks the grace of God which can satisfy you.

Conclusion

Ruth set her heart on God's grace. She was saved by grace through faith; she would faithfully serve by grace. Expecting grace, she experienced grace in a wonderful way. She found herself in Boaz' field, then at his feet, then at his feast.

Set your heart on God's grace. You were saved by grace through faith; faithfully serve by grace. You are already in your Lord's field; put yourself at His feet and you'll find yourself at His feast!

