

Ruth 3A (Draft Speaker's Notes)

We begin in chapter 2 v.1 with some details about a new character in our story. Boaz.

Ruth 2:1 ¶ Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz.

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

Ruth 2:3 So she departed and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers; and she happened to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.

1. What are four things we can observe about Boaz?

His name is Boaz. Do you know what is the meaning of his name? (In him is strength)

He is a man of great wealth

He is related to Elimelech.

He is related closely enough to Naomi to be considered her kinsman.

We'll learn more about what it means to be kinsmen later, but for now we know this man is a close relative of her husband.

In verse 2 Ruth seeks permission to go out and glean in the fields during the harvest.

2. Why do you think she asks permission from Naomi?

Demonstrating her respect for Naomi

Not knowing what was appropriate

This would be a great place to tell some stories about mistakes others have made not being familiar with new cultures. Either personal examples or stories from others like missionaries who learn what not to say or wear etc.

3. How does Naomi reassure Ruth?

In verse 2, Ruth reassures Naomi she will find a field where she can find favor, where she will get permission and it will be safe.

Keep in mind Ruth is a foreigner and is very vulnerable to attack.

Then Naomi grants her request. The need was probably great as they had no form of provision for themselves.

Look ahead to chapter 4 for a moment...

Ruth 4:3 Then he said to the closest relative, “Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, has to sell the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech.

4. Since Naomi owned land, why doesn’t she use her own land?

The land wasn’t in use...she would not have planted on it so there would be nothing for her to harvest.

5. When Ruth goes out, what field does she find herself in?

*Verse 3: She **happened** to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.*

The word for “happened” is “mic-reh” which means fate or chance

Do you think the scriptures are telling us she got lucky to end up there?

When we understand how God operates throughout scriptures we see that God has been directly involved in their lives and has directed her to exactly the place God wanted her. He did not bring her from Moab so that she would end up in someone else's field this was where he wanted her to be.

God even plans Boaz’s return from the city (verse 4) on this very day.

We get more insight into Boaz's character in the next verses.

Ruth 2:4 Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers, “ May the LORD be with you.” And they said to him, “May 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 The servant in charge of the reapers replied, “She is the young Moabite woman who returned with Naomi from the land of Moab.

Ruth 2:7 “And she said, ‘Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.’ Thus she came and has remained from the morning until now; she has been sitting in the house for a little while.”

Ruth 2:8 ¶ Then Boaz said to Ruth, “ Listen carefully, my daughter. Do not go to glean in another field; furthermore, do not go on from this one, but stay here with my maids.

Ruth 2:9 “Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Indeed, I have commanded the servants not to touch you. When you are thirsty, go to the water jars and drink from what the servants draw.”

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

Ruth 2:11 Boaz replied to her, “All that you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband has been fully reported to me, and how you left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and came to a people that you did not previously know.

Ruth 2:12 “ May the LORD reward your work, and your wages be full from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to seek refuge.”

Ruth 2:13 Then she said, “I have found favor 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.”

6. What does Boaz ask the reapers?

Verse 4 - “May the LORD be with you.”

7. What do they say in return?

Verse 4 - “May the LORD bless you.”

8. What do we learn about Boaz from this simple exchange?

He appears to be a godly man.

It would appear he was a good man to work for and had some personal relationship with the reapers.

It would also seem he knew those who worked for him and was familiar with those from around the area.

9. What question does he ask the reaper who was in charge?

Verse 6 - She is the young Moabite woman who returned with Naomi from the land of Moab.

He continues with the story of what Ruth spoke to them.

This chief servant has granted Ruth her request, just as Naomi said would happen. She is resting in the house, when in v.8 Boaz speaks to her.

10. How does Boaz address Ruth?

He addresses her as 'my daughter' not as the 'Moabite woman.'

11. What might have helped explain Boaz's compassion for a Gentile?

Look at Matthew 1:5

Boaz's mother was also a Gentile, a woman who like Ruth was excluded from the promises of Israel except for the grace of God.

12. Name the five things that Boaz instructs Ruth to do:

Stay in this field.

Stay with these maids.

*Don't **even look** to other fields.*

The servants will not touch you. (one of the fears Naomi had when Ruth wanted to go out and glean)

You will get water from the servants. (In this culture a woman would draw her own water and often be expected to do it for others)

13. What is Ruth's response to these instructions?

Ruth appears overwhelmed by his kindness

**Can we identify with what it feels like to receive undeserved, unexpected favor?
Especially when we're in a desperate situation?**

14. How does Boaz explain his favor to Ruth?

Verse 11-12 - Boaz he says he knows what Ruth has done for Naomi.

In verse 12 Boaz recognizes Ruth's faith in the God of Israel (she is a believing Gentile)

Boaz then says it is God Who is paying Ruth back for her kindness and willingness to seek Him in Israel.

How often do we miss what others do for us as actually being from the Lord or when we do something for someone else it is the Lord who gets the credit for putting us in the place to help – maybe a good place for a personal story to illustrate.

15. Ruth's reaction?

Verse 13 - Ruth acknowledges her undeserved state before Boaz and his kindness toward her.

We should never forget to show 'thankfulness' even when we know all things come

from God

Ruth 2:14 ¶ At mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come here, that you may eat of the bread and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar.” So she sat beside the reapers; and he served her roasted grain, and she ate and was satisfied and had some left.

Ruth 2:15 When she rose to glean, Boaz commanded his servants, saying, “Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not insult her.

Ruth 2:16 “Also you shall purposely pull out for her *some grain* from the bundles and leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her.”

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

16. What follows?

Sharing a meal was an important and intimate gesture – carried a lot of significance in that culture.

17. Can the audience find the two significant gestures of kindness Boaz shows during the meal?

Boaz serves Ruth.

The master would never serve his servant a meal.

He gives Ruth more food than she needed because she has food left over. This was intended for her to take to Naomi.

**Don't picture what we see in American restaurants. (joke on Supersize, etc.).
This demonstrates his compassion for both Ruth and Naomi.**

18. What is Boaz accomplishing in his instructions in verses 15 & 16?

Boaz still gives Ruth the dignity of working in his field, though he makes sure her load is light and yields a good result

Ruth 2:18 She took *it* up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also took *it* out and gave Naomi what she had left after she was satisfied.

Ruth 2:19 Her mother-in-law then said to her, “Where did you glean today and where did you work? May he who took notice of you be blessed.” So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, “The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz.”

Ruth 2:20 Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed of the LORD who has not withdrawn his kindness to the living and to the dead.” Again Naomi said to her, “The man is our relative, he is one of our closest relatives.”

Ruth 2:21 Then Ruth the Moabitess said, “Furthermore, he said to me, ‘You should stay close to my servants until they have finished all my harvest.’”

Ruth 2:22 Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his maids, so that *others* do not fall upon you in another field.”

Ruth 2:23 So she stayed close by the maids of Boaz in order to glean until the end of the barley harvest and the wheat harvest. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

19. How is God’s character reflected in Ruth’s circumstances?

Verse 17-18 - Ruth brings about 29 lbs. of grain home to Naomi as well as the left over provisions of food. (Do we see God as our provider)

Verse 19 tells us that Naomi had not directed Ruth to this field but we know God directed Ruth to this field. (Do we let God direct us?)

Verse 20-23 Naomi blesses God and Boaz for making this arrangement (Do we give God credit for our blessings?)

Ruth stays for entire harvest and continues to provide for Naomi (Do we see that our continued obedience blesses others?)