

Introduction:

- Open your Bibles to the Book of Ruth, chapter 2. You will find it right after the book of Judges and before First Samuel.
- I started a series from the book of Ruth last Wednesday night.
 - We looked at the background of the book.
 - We looked at the purpose: First to raise the level of covenant keeping character in people, in the time of judges. Second, to layout the history of David prior to his birth. Third, is the possible demonstration of the grafting in of Gentiles into Israelite life... prophetically painting the picture of Gentiles being grafted into Israel, through Christ.
- We began to look at the "hessed" of God.
- Tonight: The Beacon of Hope, Outstanding In Her Field, and Why All the Favor.

I. The Beacon Of Hope

- A. At the start of the close of chapter one, it is pretty dark according to Naomi.
 1. Don't call me pleasant or lovely (Naomi means pleasant and lovely.)
 2. The Lord is against me 1:20. That is not good theology, though I can see why she would feel that way.
 3. Call me bitter, Mara, for that is what life has been for me.
- B. But, chapter one closes and Naomi is home, in Bethlehem. She and Ruth arrive at the beginning of Barley harvest. Harvest time is always an encouraging time of life especially when the harvest is good!
- C. *Naomi had a relative.* (2:1) This is a key line, because part of her issue is that she had no husband, her land had no inheritor, and so there now exists in her family line someone who could possibly be a redeemer. (More on this later.)
 1. She hears of a man of the clan of her husband. His name is Boaz - means: "In him there is might."
 2. He is a 'worthy' man according to the word. vs 1. And he is a wealthy man too! He is wealthy, worthy, of the clan of Elimelech, (Naomi's late husband,)the answer to Naomi's problems???
 3. This re-introduces hope to her life! This hope that inspires Naomi also gives inspiration and direction to Ruth. (vs 2.) "*Let me go to the field and glean.*"
 - a) Ie. It is like David's mighty men who broke rank to get David water from the spring. They saw something and heard something in their leader.
 - b) We need to hear like Ruth! What she perceived she acts on and it is the start of a move of God. Ie. Maybe why I like The Book of Ruth is so often I have acted on other's excitement about what God is doing. Or maybe like Naomi, you need to see a little more hope in your life and share it!
 4. Boaz is also a man of God! vs. 4. This is how he greets his reapers, "The Lord be with you." And they answer, "The Lord bless you." How do we know this. Because

evidently this is what Ruth hears when she gets to the field. I.e. This is a God 'set up!" Ladies do not lower your standards, go for a godly man! They are out there.

II. Ruth Is Outstanding In Her Field (No pun intended)

A. What we see about Ruth:

1. Notice Ruth's initiative to go to the field. Her mother-in-law does not have to tell her to go. Ruth goes because she genuinely loves and cares for her mother-in-law
2. She is seriously humble. vs. 7, "Please let me glean." She does not have to ask. It is law. But she humbly asks permission to glean. I.e. Like the Syrophenecian woman of Mt 15:24-ff.
3. She worked hard all day with a short rest.
4. Ruth is strong, humble, courageous, takes initiative, and works hard all day. People take note of this kind of person and word gets back to Boaz!

B. Ruth and Boaz are heading into a testimony!

1. I want us to see that these are two ordinary people with an extraordinary relationship with God.
2. Look at how God is at work behind the scenes! Look at the character of these two people! I am telling you so much happens in our lives for the good when we just love God and keep His commandments. Ruth was a Moabite but a God seeker!
3. Boaz comes with great kindness to Ruth. 2:5-9. It prompts a question...

III. Why all the favor?

A. This is huge for us reading this today! *"Then she fell on her face, bowing 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 2:10, ESV)

1. This is a question that all of us should be asking God. The answer reveals who He is! And...who we are in Him.
2. Ruth is humble, she can't believe how kindly she is being treated. Every sinner should experience that kind of kindness from our Loving God!
3. Answering the question determines the revelation that we are walking in.
 - a) One, I have been WORKING so hard, such long days, little sleep...I think I have earned some favor.
 - b) Two, I love God. He has done so much for me. I love serving my mother-in-law I love being close to the Jewish people.
 - c) The favor does not come because she earned it. It comes because Boaz, seeing her heart, desires to give lots of favor to her!

B. This is "Hessed!"– Undeserved favor, mercy, loving kindness. Not because it is earned or deserved but because it resides in the eye of the beholder!

1. Ruth was keeping covenant with God and Naomi!

2. "hesed is practiced in an ethically binding relationship of relatives, hosts, allies, friends and rulers." Harris, R. L. (1999). [698 חסד](#). In R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., p. 306). Moody Press.
 3. Hessed reveals the heart of the helper! For the helper does it out of his own freedom. Ie. Ruth went with Naomi out of pure love for her mother-in-law Boaz recognizes her actions as goodness and calls it 'hesed' in 3:10.
 4. Covenants come out of deep relationships and the obligations of the covenant are reflected in them. IE. Like God's covenant with us through Jesus Christ!
- C. Why all the favor?
1. *"The Lord repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"* (Ruth 2:12, ESV)
 2. Ruth had found a place under the wings of God! Ruth had found a place under the wings of God's grace. Grace is not earned or deserved; it is freely given. Ruth did not impress God with a performance but with her genuine heart of love!
 3. Ruth is living Gal 5:6 *"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love."*

Conclusion:

- Ruth returns to Naomi with a good report, with favor, and with food.
- Naomi, "May Boaz be blessed!" And she starts dreaming: *"The man is a close relative of ours, on of our redeemers!"*