

Theme: God creates a glimmer of hope for Naomi and Ruth through three means: His providential orchestration, Ruth's diligent work, and Boaz's redemptive kindness.

## I. Corrie Ten Boom and the Tapestry of Life

- A. Corrie Ten Boom's incredible story *The Hiding Place*
- B. Brief synopsis and her use of a tapestry illustration
- C. The story of Ruth is like the back side of a tapestry
- D. But God is at work to weave together something beautiful!
- E. He does this in our lives as well!

## II. Our Key Characters

### A. Boaz: A man of standing

Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz. Ruth 2:1

1. The narrator wants to give us some hope to start this new phase of the story
2. Naomi has a relative who can help - more on this next week
3. Boaz is a man of standing/prominence/wealth/character
  - a. גבור - mighty, strong (Nephilim; Nimrod; Yahweh!)
  - b. חַיִל - strength; wealth; noble character - this word will be used again in our story!
  - c. Boaz is a prominent, wealthy man of noble character
4. How will he play into our story?

### B. Naomi: A shattered woman

1. Naomi is a poor, shattered widow in need of help.
2. She does not know who is alive or dead, married, or wealthy - she has been gone for over a decade.
3. At this point, she seems unaware of Boaz, whether he is alive or dead, or if he could or would help.
4. Her life and faith lie in ruins - she is probably deeply depressed and exhausted

### C. Ruth: A resourceful woman

And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." Ruth 2:2

1. Naomi seems frozen and unable to think or act.
2. But Ruth is full of energy and ideas!
3. We have already seen this determination in 1:16-17  
But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. <sup>17</sup> Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me." Ruth 1:16-17
4. She springs to action and wants to find food (2:2).
5. She is a foreigner, and this could bring great risk - but her new faith spurs her into action.
6. She is humble and recognizes her need and inferior position - she needs someone to show her favor
7. She trusts God that someone will be kind to her.

### III. Human Activity and Divine Providence

#### A. The story shows us humans who boldly act

##### 1. Ruth is full of determination and action

So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. <sup>7</sup> She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.' She went into the field and has worked steadily from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter." Ruth 2:3, 7

a. She goes out to the fields, gets permission, & works.

b. She works hard - steadily, only a short rest!

So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah. Ruth 2:17

1. She worked hard all day and then threshed the grain

2. She had an ephah - about 30 pounds of barley!

3. This was a hard-working woman!

c. Ruth's faith in God does not lead her to inactivity but rather to bold action!

##### 2. Boaz actively uses his 'standing' to bless Ruth and Naomi

a. Boaz blesses Ruth

Boaz replied, "I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband — how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. <sup>12</sup> May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge." Ruth 2:11-12

1. He has heard how active and determined Ruth has been to care for Naomi - and he blesses her!

2. He recognizes Ruth is a follower of Yahweh - he does not look down on her for being a poor foreign woman!
3. He blesses/prays that she will find care, protection, and provision under the wings of Yahweh.

b. Boaz acts to make sure Ruth is protected

Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the girls. **I have told the men not to touch you.** Ruth 2:9

1. A young woman was very vulnerable!

2. Boaz uses his power and standing to protect Ruth!

c. Boaz is a channel of provision for Ruth and Naomi (far beyond the law's requirements!)

And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled. Ruth 2:9

1. The law did not require this! He wants to bless!

At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar." When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. Ruth 2:14

2. This is well beyond the law's requirements!

3. This is a feast for a poor woman! And he lets her save some for Naomi! (v18)

As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, "Even if she gathers among the sheaves, don't embarrass her. <sup>16</sup> Rather, pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her." Ruth 2:15-16

4. This is WAY beyond the law!

5. Even if she gets in the crop - let her!

6. In fact, pull some out and leave it in her path - make sure she has all she could need!

7. No wonder Ruth could harvest so much in a day!

d. Boaz had been blessed with position and wealth, and he used it to actively find ways to be a blessing to others!

3. We will see this pattern continue next week as even Naomi begins to act with determination. Throughout this story, God's people are actively working, trusting God will bless them as they act.

#### B. The story points us to God's providence in life

And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter."<sup>3</sup> So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech. Ruth 2:2-3

1. God 'passively' provided through the law of gleaning

a. How can Ruth just get grain in someone else's field?

b. He had provided the law of gleaning

When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest.<sup>10</sup> Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God. Leviticus 19:9-10

1. God's Law demanded harvesters leave food for the poor and the alien - like Naomi and Ruth!

2. This was the law and the practice in Israel, and it was this that Ruth took advantage of to get food.

3. I will talk about this more in After Hours

c. This law was part of God's Providence - how He worked to help Ruth and Naomi.

2. God actively intervened to help Ruth and Naomi

So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. **As it turned out**, she found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech. Ruth 2:3

a. As it turned out; it just so happened that...

b. Delightful irony - this was no mere chance! God was orchestrating things behind the scenes!

c. Naomi immediately sees God's hand in this "coincidence"

"The LORD bless him!" Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. **"He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead."** She added, "That man is our close relative; he is one of our kinsman-redeemers." Ruth 2:20

d. This was no mere coincidence - God had guided Ruth's steps so that she ended up where she needed to be - in the fields of Boaz!

3. The narrator wants us to see there is a 4<sup>th</sup> key actor in this tale - Yahweh! He is acting throughout the story, both behind the scenes and through the actions of Ruth and Boaz!

## IV. Applying the Word

A. Have you found refuge under God's wings?

May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge." Ruth 2:12

1. God used the bitter valley to draw Ruth to Himself!

2. Boaz recognizes she is not just a foreigner - she is now part of God's people!

3. Ruth had declared this in chapter 1, and she reinforces it throughout the rest of the book!

4. The most important thing for every human is to find refuge under God's wings through Jesus!
5. This is not about religion or rituals - it is about a personal, vibrant, living faith in Jesus!
6. We were all in the valley of death, and Jesus came and rescued us!
7. Respond to His gracious call today!

#### B. Living with confident boldness in God's Providence

1. God's Providence and Sovereignty is all over this story! He is the 4<sup>th</sup> major character in Ruth!
2. Naomi and Ruth arrive just as barley harvest is coming, Ruth just happens to come to Boaz's field, Boaz happens to not her, Boaz is a relative, etc.
3. God is Sovereignly and Providentially ruling all things to bring redemption to Naomi and Ruth - and this is in the worst circumstances imaginable!
4. They have lost everyone; it is a time of chaos in Israel - and none of that can stop God!
5. But this Sovereignty and Providence do not make the key characters inactive - it propels them into action!
  - a. Ruth does not sit back and just 'trust God to provide' - she takes initiative, works hard all day, speaks and acts with humility and character!
  - b. Boaz does not just pray for Ruth and Naomi to be taken care of - he actively intervenes to make sure they are cared for, and even goes well beyond what the law required!
6. When we are firmly anchored in God's Sovereign Providential care, it propels us to action!

7. When we know that God is watching over us to bless us, we boldly go forth to be a blessing to others!
8. Friends, let's meditate and trust in God's Sovereignty, and then live with radical boldness to be a blessing to others!

#### C. The Table of Refuge

1. This Table reminds us that Jesus is our Refuge!
2. He protects us and keeps us even when life makes no sense
3. Come and be strengthened!

### A Glimmer of Hope

Ruth 2  
 September 14, 2025  
 Communion  
 Numbers 6:24-26

Teaching keywords: Hope; providence; sovereignty of God; biblical characters; sorrow; suffering; grieving

The LORD bless you and keep you; <sup>25</sup> the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24-26

Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz. <sup>2</sup> And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." <sup>3</sup> So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she found herself working in a field

belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech. <sup>4</sup> Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, “The LORD be with you!” “The LORD bless you!” they called back. <sup>5</sup> Boaz asked the foreman of his harvesters, “Whose young woman is that?” <sup>6</sup> The foreman replied, “She is the Moabitess who came back from Moab with Naomi. <sup>7</sup> She said, ‘Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.’ She went into the field and has worked steadily from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter.” <sup>8</sup> So Boaz said to Ruth, “My daughter, listen to me. Don’t go and glean in another field and don’t go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls. <sup>9</sup> Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the girls. I have told the men not to touch you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.” <sup>10</sup> At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She exclaimed, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me — a foreigner?” <sup>11</sup> Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband — how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. <sup>12</sup> May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.” <sup>13</sup> “May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord,” she said. “You have given me comfort and have spoken kindly to your servant — though I do not have the standing of one of your servant girls.” <sup>14</sup> At mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come

over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar.” When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. <sup>15</sup> As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, “Even if she gathers among the sheaves, don’t embarrass her. <sup>16</sup> Rather, pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don’t rebuke her.” <sup>17</sup> So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah. <sup>18</sup> She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered. Ruth also brought out and gave her what she had left over after she had eaten enough. <sup>19</sup> Her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!” Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. “The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz,” she said. <sup>20</sup> “The LORD bless him!” Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. “He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead.” She added, “That man is our close relative; he is one of our kinsman-redeemers.” <sup>21</sup> Then Ruth the Moabitess said, “He even said to me, ‘Stay with my workers until they finish harvesting all my grain.’” <sup>22</sup> Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It will be good for you, my daughter, to go with his girls, because in someone else’s field you might be harmed.” <sup>23</sup> So Ruth stayed close to the servant girls of Boaz to glean until the barley and wheat harvests were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law. Ruth 2:1-23