

Risk and Romance | Ruth Week 2

Read: Ruth Ch. 2

Why is the book of Ruth even in the Bible? It's only four chapters long. There are no miracles. No prophets. No battles or kings leading armies.

At first glance it almost feels like a small rom com story tucked into the middle of the Old Testament. Where is the significance in God's story?

What we find out is that Ruth the foreign widow gleaning in a field becomes the great-grandmother of King David.

Which means this quiet story of two widows trying to survive is actually part of the larger story of how God preserved the family line that would eventually lead to Jesus.

Suddenly the field doesn't feel so ordinary anymore.

Day 1 | Ruth's Kind of Faith

As Ruth opens up in this chapter she isn't randomly wandering in the field. She's "gleaning" - a term actually found inside the Torah (the law) for ancient Israel.

In the Torah landowners were not allowed to harvest everything - instead, God commanded them to leave the edges of the fields and any dropped grain so the vulnerable could gather food (Lev 19:9-10, 23:22; Det. 24:19). Essentially, God built social welfare into the but it worked differently than what we see with modern aid systems.

The vulnerable didn't receive food passively.

Gleaning meant walking behind harvesters picking up what was left behind. This 'gleaning' was reserved for the most vulnerable of the society most often women as women could not inherit as land was passed along the male lineage (which helps us understand Naomi's despair as her husband and sons have died, essentially leaving the women of their family helpless and poverty stricken)

When we see Ruth she is walking behind the harvesters gleaning the grain - to understand who she was though you have to understand that Ruth was doing this at risk to herself. Even though gleaning was a command, there was no protection for the vulnerable as they did this. to harassment, humiliation, and assault.

Picture this woman - a foreigner in a land of people, raising her chin to go out into the field, bending down under the sun to pick up some barley, laying down pride and discomfort to pursue

Later in the chapter, Boaz says something really interesting. He says word had already spread about Ruth about how she left her homeland, her family, and everything familiar to care for Naomi.

Ruth wasn't trying to build a reputation, honestly she was just trying to survive. Her character built one for her through her faithfulness and humility. This was the kind of woman God determined to build the lineage of Jesus through. Someone seen on the outskirts of society, slowly...yet with a heart turned toward God and those around her like Naomi. Someone willing to with courage step forward.

Reflect:

- Are there areas where you've been waiting for certainty instead of simply moving forward with faithfulness?
- Ruth's reputation spread because of her loyalty and character. If someone described your life right now, what would they say your character reveals?
- Ruth didn't see the bigger story God was writing when she walked into the field that morning. Where might God be inviting you to trust Him with a step even though you can't yet see the outcome?

Day 2 | Boaz's Character

Read: Ruth 2:8–16

At first glance, we read that Boaz enters the story and the romance signals start lighting off. We read it like we would read the opening script of a Hallmark movie; the christmas tree farmer happens upon the big city girl who is fleeing the trouble she found there - and BAM immediately fireworks start flying.

Underneath the text though, there's a few hidden clues about the kind of man Boaz truly is.

He greets his workers with:

“The Lord be with you.”

And they respond:

“The Lord bless you.”

That's not just a polite greeting. This is the kind of work culture Boaz created - one rich in his faith the commands of The Lord is what He lives His WHOLE life by. Not one part is separate - not his finances, not his work, and not...his relational life. And it shapes HOW he speaks, how he notices people, and how he uses his position of influence.

He NOTICES Ruth. Which might not seem like a big deal at first unless you're one of those “love at first sight people - but landowners didn't typically pay attention to gleaners.

Yet Boaz does.

He asks about her story. He protects her. He tells his workers not to touch her or bother her. He invites her to eat with them (again, not something a landowner would typically do - invite the poor to eat with him). And then he does something even more interesting.

He instructs his workers to intentionally leave extra grain behind for her so she can pick it up to have extra.

Boaz isn't just following the law, he's going beyond it. Seeing the person in front of him and their needs living from a place of generosity even while going against the norms of the day. Essentially, we see Boaz modeling the heart of God.

Reflect:

- We know that God eventually directs the lineage of Jesus through Boaz and Ruth - what does this say to you about God and His character?
- Do you tend to approach God's commands looking for the minimum requirement... or looking for ways to reflect His heart?
- Where has God given you influence at work, in your home, or in your community that could be used to protect or uplift someone else? Who in your life might you be overlooking right now?

Day 3 | God's Quiet Providence

Read: Ruth 2:17–23

There's a phrase tucked into this chapter that's easy to read right past if we're not paying attention. It says Ruth "*happened*" to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz.

At first glance, it sounds like coincidence. Just one of those moments where the big city girl "stumbles" onto the Christmas tree farm in our Hallmark movie - where someone ends up in the right place at the right time.

But if you've read enough of Scripture, you start to notice something. God often works through moments that look ordinary. Yes there are moments of miracles and angels appearing.

But so often we see Him working in the 'extra'-ordinary moments.

Just a woman entering a field.

Yet THAT field belonged to the very man who could eventually restore Naomi's family and secure Ruth's - and the world's - future. Sometimes when we read stories in the Bible we imagine that the people in them could see the whole plan unfold. But all Ruth knew was that there was work to keep from starving.

But God was already working behind the scenes.

Which raises a question worth sitting with for a moment.

How often do we assume God isn't working simply because we can't see the full picture yet? Sometimes providence doesn't look dramatic. Sometimes it looks like:

- a conversation you didn't expect
- a place you "happen" to end up
- a person you meet at the right moment
- or a door that opens quietly in front of you

Looking back later, those moments begin to form a pattern.

Ruth thought she was simply going to gather grain.

But she was stepping into the beginning of a redemption story that would eventually lead all the way to King David... and generations later, to Jesus.

Reflection

Take a moment to think about your own story.

- Are there moments in your life that felt random at the time but later began to look like God's guidance?
- Where might God be working right now in ways that aren't immediately obvious?
- When life feels uncertain, what helps you trust that God is still present and at work behind the scenes?

Pause for a moment and consider this:

Sometimes faith isn't about seeing the entire plan.

Sometimes it's simply trusting that the next faithful step may place us right where God is already working.