

The Book of Ruth

Chapter 2

Notes on Chapter 2

- vs. 1 – Boaz (“strength in him” or perhaps “swiftness”) is the son of Salma (“garment”) and grandson of Nahshon (“enchanter”) – I Chronicles 2:11-12, Matthew 1:4-5, Luke 3:32
 - Nahshon is the “prince” or head of the tribe of Judah during the Exodus – Numbers 1:7
 - Nahshon’s sister Elishaba (“God is her oath”) was the wife of Aaron – Exodus 6:23
 - Reese gives Boaz’s age as 122.
- vs. 2 – The custom was to not to thoroughly harvest the field or along its edges so that the poor could glean from them – Leviticus 19:9-10, 23:22
- vs. 2 – That Naomi did not go to glean also shows her age or state of health kept her from participating. If they did not glean, they would not eat.
- vs. 3 – It is not luck nor happenstance that brought Ruth to Boaz’s field, it was Divine Providence.
- vs. 4 – The character of Boaz is revealed as his greeting to his workers and in their response back to him. I think he is coming in the middle of the day to check on the progress of the harvest and on the condition of his workers.
 - The fact that he is not working with them points to him being older.
- vs. 5 – Boaz’s inquiry shows the culture of the time. It was not important as to who the individual was, but rather their family connections.
- vs. 6 – The foreman’s reply shows the same, noting Ruth’s connection to Naomi but not her name.
- vs. 7 – The humility and diligence of Ruth are displayed here.
 - Her humility in her request for permission to glean.
 - Her diligence in that she had worked from early in the day until then (afternoon?) only taking a short break (probably in a tent or canopy set up for the workers to have shade).
- vs. 8 – “my daughter” – points to Boaz being much older than Ruth.
- vs. 8-9 – Boaz’s instructions to Ruth
 - She was welcome, or rather expected, to glean only from his fields.
 - She could follow Boaz’s female servants and be in their company.
 - She was promised protection from the male servants.
 - She was welcome to refresh herself from water drawn for the workers.
- vs. 10 – Another display of Ruth’s humility along with her appreciation.
- vs. 11-12 – Boaz’s reason for blessing Ruth is based on the display of her faith. He recognizes her faith and calls on God to honor it.

- vs. 13 – Another display of Ruth’s humility. She is saying that she hopes he will continue to show her favor, treating her as one of his own servants when she is not.
- vs. 14 – Boaz continues to display favor on Ruth at mealtime:
 - She is allowed to eat from his supplies without discrimination.
 - She is allowed to sit among his servants.
 - She eats to her fill.
- vs. 14 – The “parched corn” refers to a custom of holding a bundle of heads of barley over a fire until the chaff was burned away and the grain roasted. The language is a little unclear as to whether Ruth is simply allowed to take part in this with the other workers or if Boaz personally roasts the grain for her (I prefer this option).
- vs. 15 – The custom would be for those gleaning to lag behind the reapers until barley had been cut down and bundled into sheaves to be threshed. Boaz is allowing her great liberty and access to more grain.
- vs. 16 – Boaz is instructing his workers to purposely leave more stalks or grain that they would normally harvest.
- vs. 17 – After working all day gleaning and then threshing her gathered stalks, she has one *ephah* (equal to 5 dry gallons, .62 bushels, or 22 liters) of barley grain.
- vs. 18 – Ruth brings to Naomi the grain she harvested plus some leftovers from the meal in the field.
- vs. 19 – Naomi recognizes the bounty that Ruth has brought is beyond any expectation for someone to glean in a random field.
- vs. 20 – This is likely the first good thing to happen in Naomi’s life in many years, excepting Ruth.
- vs. 21-22 – Naomi instructs Ruth to continue gleaning only from Boaz’s fields.
- vs. 23 – Traditionally, these harvests are in the period between the Feasts of Firstfruits (Leviticus 23:9-14) and the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:15-22). Roughly, the barley harvest is in April, and the wheat harvest is in May.