

I. Introduction – providence, lovingkindness and redemption.

II. Favor needed. v. 1-2

A. Introducing Boaz. v. 1

B. Ruth seeks permission from Naomi to go out gleaning. v. 2

1. Ruth takes initiative and honors her mother-in-law. 1:16-17
2. Ruth knows God's Law which reflects His care for widows. Ps. 68:5 Lev. 19:9-10
23:22 Dt. 24:19-22 25:5-6 Ex. 22:22

C. What can we learn from God's Word about helping the poor?

1. Because we live in a fallen world, poverty will never be eliminated. Mt. 26:11
2. What are the causes of poverty? 1:1-5 Prov. 10:4-5 6:6-11 24:30-34
3. God's law reflects His wisdom.
 - a. The deserving poor obtain food in proportion to their effort.
 - b. That which otherwise would have been wasted is utilized.
 - c. The community participates in helping the poor and provides accountability.
4. What does the New Testament teach about helping the poor? 1 Jo. 3:17 Js. 1:27
 - a. The family is the first line of defense. 1 Tim. 5:4
 - b. Then the church offers help. Ga. 2:10 2 Co. 8-9 Acts 2:45 4:34-35
 - c. Those who refuse to work should not receive assistance. 2 Thess. 3:10-12
5. Do we wisely care for our poor? 2 Thess. 3:7-13
6. The gospel transforms the thief into a worker who reflects God's lovingkindness by sharing with those in need. Eph. 4:28 John 13:35 2 Cor. 8:9
7. There should be no needy among God's people. Acts 4:34 Deut. 15:4

D. Ruth still needs someone to look upon her favorably. v. 9,15 Isa. 17:4ff

III. Favor supplied. v. 3-16

A. Ruth by chance happens upon the field of Boaz who just happens to arrive. v. 3-4

1. From a human perspective this is a coincidence. v. 3 1 Sam. 6:9 20:26 2 Sam. 1:6
2. From the divine perspective this is an integral part of God's plan. Pr. 16:9 19:21
3. Boaz arrives and exchanges blessings with his workers. v. 4

B. Boaz inquires (and learns) about Ruth. v. 5-7

C. Boaz shows favor to Ruth. v. 8-9

1. Why does Boaz call Ruth, "daughter"? v. 8,22
2. Boaz gladly fulfills his covenant duty.
3. Boaz goes beyond his duty. 2 Sa. 23:17 Gen. 24:11,13 1 Sa. 9:11 Josh 9:21ff

D. Boaz notices Ruth for all the right reasons. v. 10-11

1. Ruth asks why Boaz would look upon her so favorably. v. 10 3:10-11 Pr. 31:10
2. Boaz appreciates her extraordinary kindness and loyalty towards Naomi. v. 11a
3. Boaz admires how Ruth turned from Moab and its gods to the LORD and His people. v. 11b,12b 1:16-17 Gen. 2:24 11:28 24:7
4. She has sought refuge under the wings of the LORD, the God of Israel. v. 12b
Ps. 91:4 36:7 57:1 61:4 Dt. 32:11ff 1 Ki. 6:24 9:6

- E. Boaz blesses and prays for Ruth. v. 12
 - 1. This is the second prayer for Ruth. Both will be answered. 1:8-9 Eph. 3:20
 - 2. Boaz prays that the LORD will reward her fully for what she has done. 1:21
 - 3. He also prays that the LORD will continue to protect her under His wings. 3:9
 - 4. If God deals with us according to grace then what place do rewards/wages have?
Ro. 6:23 2 Co. 8:9 Ga. 3:10-13 6:7 Pr. 19:17 13:21 Php. 3:9 4:18-19 Mt. 25:31ff
- F. Ruth is comforted by the kindness of Boaz. v. 13
- G. Boaz shows further favor to Ruth. v. 15-16 Ps. 22:26

IV. Favor celebrated. v. 17-23

- A. Boaz sends Ruth home full. v. 17-18
 - 1. After working all day in the field she beats out the grain. v. 17a
 - 2. Ruth brings home a huge amount of grain – an ephah (30 pounds?). v. 18b
 - 3. The quantity of grain reflects Boaz’ generosity and Ruth’s industry.
- B. Naomi revives, recognizing that God is blessing her. v. 19-20
 - 1. She thought that the LORD was against her, but now she acknowledges His kindness. v. 20 1:8,20-21 3:10 Ex. 15:13 Num. 14:18 Rom. 2:4
 - 2. This Boaz is our kinsman-redeemer. v. 20b
 - 3. Naomi is probably thinking ahead (even if Boaz and Ruth aren’t (yet)). 3:1ff
- C. Ruth continues to glean in Boaz’ field. v. 21-23

V. Concluding applications.

- A. Lessons about God’s providence. Romans 8:28 Lam. 3:19-26
 - 1. God truly is working all things together for those who love Him.
 - 2. It often takes a while for us to understand how He is working.
 - 3. God works through our efforts – concurrence.
 - 4. God works through the faithfulness and love of His people.
 - 5. God works thorough the prayers of His people. 1:9 2:12
 - 6. God works through our ordinary decisions to bring about His perfect purpose.
 - 7. God works out His kind purpose in spite of human sin and failure.
 - 8. Trust God to meet your needs. Phil. 4:19 Mt. 6:33
- B. The story of Ruth and Naomi is our story in Christ.
 - 1. Favor needed – we were empty and needed favor. Eph. 2:1-3 Rom. 3:10ff
 - 2. Favor granted – God has shown us lovingkindness in Christ. Eph. 2:4ff Ro. 3:23ff
 - 3. Favor celebrated. Acts 13:48

Discussion questions

1. Is there any sense in which things happen by chance? Explain your answer. 2:3
2. How has God shown special kindness to you through other people?
3. How is God’s wisdom displayed in how the poor were helped under the Old Covenant?
4. How are the poor to be helped under the New Covenant?
5. What can both poor and rich do to apply the lessons of this chapter?
6. What is providence?
7. How is God’s providence displayed in this passage?
8. How is God’s lovingkindness displayed in this passage?
9. How do you see God working in the ordinary events in your life?
10. How is the story of Ruth and Naomi needing and receiving favor similar to your story?