

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON TWENTY-EIGHT: RUTH 2:2

"And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter."

Naomi had apparently coached Ruth in the laws of Moses. That is, the laws God gave to Moses. For it is the Lord Who commands us.

God made provision for the poor in His instructions to farmers. When reaping their fields, the farmers were to leave the corners of their fields untouched (Lev. 19:9-10; 23:22). In addition, as they reaped, the workers would drop a little or leave a little behind for the poor (Dt. 24:19-21).

From the brief description we get of their home life, we see that Naomi and Ruth were on their own in Bethlehem. They did not take their meals with family or friends. They had to provide for themselves.

Ruth, therefore, volunteered to be the one to glean in the grain fields. She was younger than Naomi. Gleaning involved walking behind the reapers, leaning over, picking up the stalks of grain, and carrying the grain that was gathered. The more she gleaned the heavier the bundle Ruth had to carry. By the end of the day she would be tired and hot, with sore feet and an aching back.

God provided for the poor. But, He didn't do it through a welfare system. The widows, fatherless children, and "strangers" (non-Jews, like Ruth) were free to take advantage of God's provision, but they had to work to do it. God created man to work. In the perfect environment of the Garden of Eden Adam was given a job: gardening (Gen. 2:15). God did not create us to be idle.

Ruth respected her mother-in-law Naomi's age and wisdom. She acknowledged Naomi's better understanding of the culture. Therefore, she requested permission before going into the fields to work. And, she waited for that permission to be granted in case Naomi would have had a different plan for obtaining food. Ruth was looking for confirmation from Naomi that gleaning was the best course of action at this point.

God plans ahead. Before Naomi lost her husband, God had written into the law a way for her to obtain food. Before the "stranger" Ruth entered Bethlehem, God had instructed farmers to leave behind some grain. Before Adam and Eve sinned, God had mapped out the plan of redemption.

Before God took my husband home to glory, He had a plan for me. I just need to figure out what that plan is. Like Ruth, I will look for guidance in the Word of God. His instructions to me are there. And, like Ruth, working out my instructions may involve consulting other Christians who have insight into His Word. I believe that participating in this group - the Naomi-Ruth Connection - is part of His plan for me.

He has a plan for you, too. He has made provision for you to overcome your physical, emotional, and spiritual trials. The answer is in His word.

"Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word. Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me." Psalm 119:17-19