

## NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

### LESSON THIRTY-TWO: RUTH 2:6-7

**"And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house."**

Boaz's faith in his foreman was not misplaced. The foreman knew exactly who the mystery woman was. He knew her name, her country of origin, and how she came to be in Bethlehem. He also knew when she arrived in the field, her purpose, how hard she worked, and when and where she took a break. Perhaps the foreman didn't trust the stranger from Moab and, thus, kept an eye on her. Or, perhaps, he was curious because she was from a different culture and, so, he watched to see what she would do. Whatever his reason, the foreman had observed Ruth, and reported what he had witnessed to his boss.

There is always somebody watching. As Christians, we want people to see God reflected in us. If possible, we want to win them by our conduct and our words. At the very least, we hope to plant a seed that will eventually lead to salvation.

The death of a loved one presents a unique opportunity to be a witness to others. It's a time when people's thoughts are centered on their own mortality and what lies beyond the grave. It is also the time when you are at your lowest. Plagued by grief and loss, you are not thinking about how you can minister to others by your example. You are wrapped in your own pain and memories. You may not be aware that others are watching you. But they are.

God gives us grace to get through each day. His Word and His Spirit comforts us. Other Christians bolster us up with encouraging words and thoughtful actions. Someone is watching. To the unsaved your reaction to tragedy may be incomprehensible. How can you be so calm and peaceful? What is it that you have that they don't?

Ruth was careful not to step on any toes. She did not want to accidentally contravene a law or custom that was unknown to her. Therefore, she asked Naomi if it was okay for her to venture out and glean and gather food for them. When she found a place to do this, she first asked permission of the foreman to work in the fields. And, when she got that permission, she worked diligently all day, taking only a short break in the designated building.

The foreman was not the only one watching Ruth. She was a Gentile in a Jewish town. She came from a background of idolatry, but claimed to believe in the God of Israel. She was a companion to one of their own, Naomi, the widow of Elimelech. The whole town watched her. They talked about her among themselves so news of her spread throughout the town. It's likely the foreman had heard of her before she showed up in the field. He obviously assumed Boaz knew of her, too, when he said, "it's her, the Moabite woman that returned with Naomi."

Ruth earned a good reputation in Bethlehem from her treatment of Naomi. The people watched her, and she won their approval by her kindness to her mother-in-law. People are watching you, too. What do they see? And, how does it reflect on your God?

*"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12*