

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON THIRTY-FOUR: RUTH 2:10

"Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"

Ruth's response to Boaz's kindness is astonishment and humility. She expected to be met with scorn or just ignored. Jews did not look upon the Moabites with favor. The Mosaic Law excluded them from public worship. Yet this wealthy Jewish landowner offered her special privileges.

Ruth humbly bowed before him demonstrating respect and acknowledging his superior position. "Why have I found grace in your eyes?" she asks. The word "grace" here comes from a Hebrew root word indicating "kindness to an inferior." It means "to be merciful or show pity." Ruth recognized that she was just a poor widow, a foreigner of no importance. While Boaz was a leader of the community, a rich landowner with many servants. She had no expectations of being noticed by this great man (the Hebrew word translated "knowledge" here means "to take notice of or to acknowledge").

This beautiful story of Boaz and Ruth illustrates the relationship between Christ and His Church. The word "grace" figures prominently in that relationship, too. It is by His grace (unmerited favor) that we are saved (Eph. 2:8-9). Our spiritual needs are met. Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection has saved us from the penalty of sin (hell), and is currently saving us from the power of sin (by yielding to the indwelling Holy Spirit, I can resist temptation), and will save us from the presence of sin (when we die or are raptured).

But God's favor is extended to the physical and emotional realms, as well. Like Ruth, who was provided with the opportunity to gather food for herself and Naomi, God provides us with food, clothes, shelter, and the physical necessities of life (Ps. 37:25; Mt 6:25-34). As for our emotional needs, Jesus gave us the indwelling Holy Spirit to be our Comforter and Teacher (John 14:26). He also gave us His peace to calm our fears (John 14:27; Phil. 4:6-7).

Have you taken advantage of God's provision for your emotional health in your time of sorrow? Jesus experienced grief during His time on earth (John 11:35). He, therefore, provided a way of comfort and peace for us. This comes through many avenues: Bible reading, prayer, meditating on His Word, sermons, conversations with Christian friends, Christian music, and more. How has God provided for you in your time of sorrow?

"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations." Psalm 89:1