



... Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not...

Part Seven – Providential Care

11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. 12 The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. 13 Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens. 14 And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left. 15 And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not: 16 And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. (Ruth 2:11-16)

Under whose wings have you come trust? If it be the Lord's wings, your reward is secured in Christ. Ruth realizes she does not 'fit in' with the other gleaners and handmaidens of Boaz; yet, Boaz has treated Ruth with the utmost respect and kindness. Boaz has inquired and learned much of the character of Ruth, and he is disposed kindly toward her. Boaz stands in as a type of Christ toward Ruth, His Bride (the Church). It is a wonder to me that the Church, with all of its shortcomings and imperfections have found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Ruth has asked Boaz a question of profound meaning. It is the same question I have so often asked God when I reflect on such a great salvation that I have been granted by grace through Christ: *"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 shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"* This was no pretended affectation on the part of Ruth. Simply look on the circumstances. Ruth is now a very poor young widow who has only recently come to live in Bethlehem. In order to acquire food for

nourishment for herself and Naomi, she has come to glean in the fields around Bethlehem. Seemingly by chance, she has chosen the field of Boaz, a very important figure in the city, and even a near kinsman to Naomi. Moreover, Ruth is from Moab – a place that is hateful to the people of Israel. When you answered the call of Christ, there was nothing of worth in your soul to make you a choice disciple. You, too, were a poor, ragged, helpless stranger from a world that was in rebellion against God. It is no surprise that Ruth is shocked by the hospitality and cordiality of Boaz. We are all shocked by the same from Christ.

Boaz has not acquired great influence, honor, and wealth by being unwise. He can choose the soil that will produce a good harvest, and he sees that in Ruth. He is ready to give an answer to Ruth. *“And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband.”* The important people of Bethlehem have the ear of Boaz. The news has spread like wild-fire that Naomi has returned from Moab bringing with her a virtuous young widow of her son, Mahlon. It has been whispered in his ear all that is known of this fine young woman. Boaz is much impressed by Ruth’s character and, now, her beauty and virtue. It is one thing of great nobility to honor one’s husband all the days of his life; but it is yet another to continue that honor after his passing as Ruth has done for her mother-in-law, Naomi. Such devotion and loyalty is almost beyond our comprehension. Boaz recognizes this as a mark of distinction for character and human virtue. Boaz continues, *“ . . . and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.”* Not only has Ruth remained fast by the side of Naomi, but she has given up the heritage she enjoyed in Moab – leaving her friends, family, wealth – all to come with Naomi among a people who were strangers to her.

“The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.” Acts of kindness toward the people of God are accounted acts of kindness to the Lord Himself. *“I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”* (Matt 25:35-40) Ruth has been that source of solace for Naomi. We will see, a bit later, how the blessing of Boaz comes to pass in full. Trusting in God, we come to trust under the protecting wings of His only Begotten Son just as Ruth will do by Boaz.

Here is what Adam Clarke says about Verse 12: *This is spoken with great modesty and piety: The kindness I (Boaz) show thee is little in comparison of thy desert; God alone can give thee a full reward for thy kindness to thy husband and mother-in-law, and he will do it, because thou art come to trust under his wings—to become a proselyte to his religion. The metaphor is taken from the young of fowls, who, seeing a bird of prey, run to their mother to be covered by her wings from danger, and also to take shelter from storms, tempests, cold, etc. It is evident from this that Ruth had already attached herself to the Jewish religion.* —Adam Clarke’s Commentary

“Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.” What a lovely woman is Ruth! No one is like God, or possessing of the righteousness of His Son, Jesus; yet, He comforts us and woos

us to His beloved side. We are not good enough to inherit the blessings of Heaven, but we are enabled to do so anyway through the merits of Jesus, our Savior. Jesus forever spoke friendly to the sinners whom He encountered along the way and reserved His wrath, only, for the Pharisees and religious leaders who were hypocrites.

“And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.” If there were ever a Cupid, then the heart of Boaz has become a pin-cushion for his arrows. He has never met such a lovely creature as Ruth. Every word she utters is like icing on the cake. That is how love is, is it not? It was not customary to feed the gleaners of the field with the same provision of the reapers, but Boaz, and God, makes exceptions for the objects of His love. Being servants of God, we can feed His people with morsels, but He will fill to the uttermost. *“Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”* (Colossians 3:24) Ruth did not consider herself of the same good quality of the other women reapers for as she did not sit along with them, or in the midst of them, in the row with them, as ranking with them, but on one side of them, which was an instance of her great modesty. Ruth was given so much that she was “sufficed” and even took the leftovers to her mother-in-law, Naomi. (see Ruth 2:18)

When one comes to trust under the wings of the Lord, she will be fully protected. After Ruth rose up and left, hear what Boaz says: *“And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not.”* God does not only consider our present needs and security, but looks out for future dangers as well on our behalf. Reaping, even among the sheaves, means partaking of the full harvest itself and not only of the droppings from the reapers. God is like that to His Elect people.

Boaz was a man of God and, therefore, demonstrates a Godly character. The next verse is so much like God that it must have been taught Boaz by God: *“And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.”* When we put our trust in the Lord, suddenly wonderful things happen. Those things may not be apparent to the world, or what the world places a value upon, but the recipient of the blessings of Heaven are well aware of their worth. Leave no provision to chance, but cast handfuls of blessing on purpose before Ruth that she may gain far more than a gleaner is party to receive.

Whether you know it or not, God casts “Handful’s on Purpose” before those who love and serve Him. Have you not noticed the joy and peace in your heart when you give a secret gift to the poor, the needy, or a little child? God will not allow secret deeds of kindness to go unrewarded. You cannot even count the value of the return on God’s grant to you. Do I speak of wealth – no, not only. Do I speak of power – no not only? Do I speak of health and strength – no not only? We may receive the first, but the latter rains of love and joy will outlast and out-value every other. *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”* (Matt 6:33) Have you reaped more than a gleaner is entitled to do?