Chapter 1 gave us the circumstances that brought Naomi and Ruth back to Bethlehem. It was a famine that caused them to leave and trials and grief that caused her return. All in the sovereign plan of God.

1. Gleaning In The Perfect Field (Vs. 1-3)
   (a) Ruth requested to glean in the field. In ancient Israel, God's law made special provision for the poor, widows, orphans, and foreigners by allowing them to collect leftover grain from fields, vineyards, or orchards after the harvest. It was a form of social welfare. Instead of begging, they worked.
   (b) Consider the circumstances again: left a homeland, a foreigner with no provider, i.e. husband. Even in the circumstances, God is a provider.
   (c) She "***happened***" to come to the field of Boaz. Let's not miss this short phrase as it's one of the most theologically rich phrases in Ruth.
      i. The phrase literally means in the Hebrew "***her chance chanced upon***" and some would say "***as luck would have it***." But we do not believe in luck, for there is no such thing as luck. God didn't just set the world spinning and what came about came about.
      ii. The word Providence isn't mentioned specifically, but it reasonable to conclude God preserves and governs everything in the universe. This view avoids **(1)** deism **(2)** pantheism **(3)** chance or randomness **(4)** fate.
      iii. It's deliberately iconic in Biblical storytelling, as the author uses this to highlight what seems accidental from a human perspective, but is God's providence at work behind the scenes.
      iv. It seems she randomly chose a field (vs. 2) but we see that she sought a field where she might find favor and it's the Lord's hand that landed here in that field.

Application (vs. 1-3) is God's sovereignty in the ORDINARY events of life. Ruth didn't know where she was going, but God did.

2. The Providing God (Vs. 4-17)
   (a) In the right field, but she was waiting (vs. 4-7). She was sitting in the house for a while.
   (b) It was Boaz who took notice of her. It is God who is faithful while we are waiting.
   (c) The kind favor of Boaz (vs. 8-9) don't go to another field. I have protected you from them, and drink from where the servants drink. **NOTE**: this isn't a prosperity gospel text, it's God providing for his own.
   (d) An amazing grace we cannot understand (vs. 10) as she asks why have I found favor since I am a foreigner? Ephesians 2:12 "**Remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world**." Ephesians 2:19 "**So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household**." We might ask the same thing, why have I found favor?
   (e) She left all (vs. 11) her mother and father and her land to care for Naomi, and to come to a land and people she didn't know, cf. Ruth 1, vs. 16-17. Luke 14:26-27 "**If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple**." Boaz had heard of her kindness to Naomi. Oh the power of a testimony.
   (f) Under the wings of comfort you have come to seek. Not only had Ruth been blessed by caring for Naomi, she had come to seek comfort and care from the Lord. May the Lord bless you (vs. 12 your work and wages be full) but an idiom used about the wings you have come to seek refuge under. Psalm 36:7 "**How precious is Your**

lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings." The kindness of Boaz and grace, as she responded about the favor even though she is not like one of them (maidservants).

(g) Boaz showed his increasing interest in Ruth by inviting her to share the noon meal with his reapers. The meal consisted of bread (or in a broader sense, food), wine vinegar, and roasted grain. Boaz himself served her as she sat with his reapers. Ruth ate till she was satisfied, with food left over. Then she left to return to the fields.[1]

(h) After the meal (vs. 15), this foreigner and stranger was given the opportunity to glean among the sheaves, not just picking up what was left. Not only could she do this (vs. 16), they would purposely leave her bundles of grain.

3. The Results Of Faithfulness (Vs. 17-19)
   (a) So she gleaned (vs. 17). She just worked and found joy in what God had provided.
   (b) She gleaned about 20-30 pounds of barley, a remarkably generous amount.

4. A Kinsman Redeemer (Vs. 20-23)
   (a) A second blessing on Boaz, but she acknowledges that the Lord has been kind to both living and dead.
   (b) Boaz qualifies as a kinsman redeemer.
      (i) A man who under the levite law could fulfill the duty of preserving the name of the dead by marrying Ruth. The responsibilities of the kinsman-redeemer included avenging the death of a murdered relative (Nu 35:19), marrying a childless widow of a deceased brother (Dt 25:5-10), buying back family land that had been sold (Lev 25:25), buying a family member who had been sold as a slave (Lev 25:47-49), and looking after needy and helpless members of the family.[2]
   (c) Don't leave that field (vs. 22)! Don't go to another one; you may be hurt or robbed or killed. Don't leave.
   (d) So she stayed and gleaned. The Lord is faithful. O the Lord puts us in redemptive places, and it's often uncertain trials and circumstances that get us there.

Conclusion/Application

Tragedy, age, famines, and a faithful follower. There are times we go and have to wait, vs. 7 "**She has been sitting here a little while**." A famine and tragedy brought her to a field she didn't know, but the Lord did. Maybe you find yourself in affliction and seem to be waiting, Psalm 119:71 "**It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes**." Wherever the Lord has you now, glean and reap. For it's His place He wants you.

The favor she received as a foreigner (vs. 10) is the grace and favor we know as redeemed children of God. We can't answer why He has shown us mercy. Ephesians 2:4 "**But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us**." Romans 5:8 "**But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us**." It is the mercy of God that has brought you here today, whether you see it or not.

---

[1] *Expositor's Bible Commentary (Abridged Edition): Old Testament; Copyright 2004.*

[2] *Expositor's Bible Commentary (Abridged Edition): Old Testament; Copyright 2004.*