

Ruth 2:1-7-Firstfruits of Faithfulness

22 So Naomi returned, and with her Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, who returned from the land of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

God uses the _____ of Ruth to _____ hope in Naomi's heart and life. Naomi returned with Ruth, arriving in Bethlehem at the beginning of _____ harvest.

The spring harvest

Barley matured faster and would be _____ sooner. The firstfruits of grain offered during the Festival of Unleavened Bread would have been _____ because it was ripe by the time of the Feast of First Fruits.

Newly harvested grain could not be _____ until the firstfruits of grain had been offered on the "day after the Sabbath" of the Festival of Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:9-1, 14). Foreigners, such as Ruth, were specifically _____ in the rejoicing and celebration taking place after the offering of firstfruits.

The purpose of firstfruits is to demonstrate that God is _____ of all our wealth. He gives us the _____ to attain success by returning to the Lord the " _____ " of our produce. We are acknowledging the _____.

The firstborn son was also to be redeemed according to the law, which is why in Luke 2:22-23 we see Joseph and Mary bringing baby Jesus to the _____ in Jerusalem.

So, why is this important to us as Christians?

Well, it was on the _____ day of the week, Sunday after Passover, that some disciples visit Jesus' tomb and find it _____. Resurrection Sunday, of course followed the sacrifice of our Passover lamb, and so was on the day of the feast of First Fruits. (see 1 Cor 15:20-21).

As Christians, as the Body of Christ, we are also part of the firstfruits. James 1:18 says **He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.** We, the Church are the ones who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, as Romans 8:23 tells us, we should live our lives as those who wait _____ for Jesus' return.

So why is this important to the story of Ruth?

Ruth, this gentile bride is symbolic of the _____ as firstfruits. These two women, who have endured such hardship and difficulties, arrive at the _____ of a grain known for enduring difficult growing conditions. When God leads us His timing is _____.

Ruth Gleans in Boaz' Field

2 Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz.

Literally, the verse says, "To Naomi, there was a close _____ who she knew through her husband". He is a _____, as well.

Boaz' name is often taken to mean "in him is strength". Solomon, when he built the temple several generations later, named the two supporting pillars "Jachin and _____"

2 And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after one in whose sight I may find favor."

The abruptness of Ruth's request implies that Ruth _____ no time in asking the question. Despite a long journey, instead of _____ and recuperating, Ruth went immediately out to begin making a living for her and her mother-in-law. The word Glean, which is the Hebrew Laqat means "to _____ together" or "to pick up". It means to pick up the left-overs after someone has harvested a field. And the only reason why there were left-overs is because God had _____ it back in Leviticus 19:9-10. So Gleaning was God's way to take care of the _____ people of the land and make sure that they survived.

3 So she departed and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers; and she happened to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.

Now it's interesting here, because the Bible says that she _____ to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz. God has _____ directed Ruth to Boaz' field. God was in _____ of sending Ruth to this field and God is in control of the circumstances in our lives.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says **Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. 6**

In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. Well, she has been trusting in the Lord for her future, and not doing the practical, sensible thing, but following God even when it's _____.

She's _____ God in the way that she's living her life—living in humility, displaying lovingkindness to those around her. And we find that God has made her path straight—

_____ into the field of Boaz, who is the _____ person who can set everything right that has gone wrong in her and Naomi's life so far. And there's a lesson here for us in _____ the

Lord, _____ Him, doing things _____ way-He will direct _____ path

4 Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers, "May the Lord be with you." And they said to him, "May the Lord bless you."

Just while Ruth "happens" to be out in Boaz' field, it's just at that _____ that Boaz comes out to

check on his workers. Boaz' first words are a _____ to those working for him. In this

greeting Boaz shows both that he _____ about his workers and that he is a _____ of the Lord.

5 Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?"

Boaz _____ notices Ruth. Boaz is going to be the instrument through which grace is shown to Ruth. Notice that from this point on, Boaz doesn't really seem _____ about the harvest, he's concerned about how Ruth is _____.

6 The servant in charge of the reapers replied, "She is the young Moabite woman who returned with Naomi from the land of Moab.

When the servant mentions that Ruth is the Moabite who's returned home with Naomi, his close friend's _____ and that she is caring so _____ for one of his family members, it says worlds about Ruth's character.

7 And she said, 'Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' Thus she came and has remained from the morning until now; she has been sitting in the house for a little while."

She's asking _____, even though she technically doesn't have to.

Emphasized: Ruth's lack of _____ all morning until now. The implication is that she has been

_____ in her determination to provide for herself and Naomi, and despite her desperation, has been exceptionally courteous. Ruth is exhibiting a lot of "grace under pressure". We experience

hard circumstances and difficulties in our walk with God, and as Christians, we should also demonstrate "grace under pressure".