

Ruth 18-23: **May He who took notice of you be blessed.**

18 She took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also took it out and gave Naomi what she had left after she was satisfied.

Naomi's been _____ all day whether Ruth would come back at all, or whether she would come back having been mistreated all day, or whether she'd been turned away as a foreigner, or just been able to get the left-overs from the left-over gleanings. Imagine her _____ when Ruth came walking in with _____ pounds of barley!

Then, Ruth brought out and gave her something _____ that she had left over from her satisfying meal. Ruth to come back with all of this barley, but to come back with _____ food, ready to _____.

19 Her mother-in-law then said to her, "Where did you glean today and where did you work? May he who took notice of you be blessed."

She immediately blesses whomever has taken notice of Ruth, without even knowing who it is. This phrase "take notice of you" *Hiphil* means "to recognize for _____"—to recognize Ruth for herself—not as a stranger, but for who she is as a _____.

Notice that the Bible doesn't spend a lot of time talking about the blessing—all of that barley and the ready-to-eat meal that Ruth brought home. The focus is immediately on the _____ of the blessings—Boaz.

So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, "The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz."

As soon as Naomi hears that it is Boaz who has shown them such kindness and shown such attention to Ruth, she sees and understands the possibilities of what this means. Her spirit is suddenly no longer downcast, she has been lifted up from the depths. No longer _____, she is beginning to see the _____.

20 Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed of the Lord who has not withdrawn his kindness to the living and to the dead."

Notice, she's not thanking Boaz for the gift itself, but for the _____: the *hesed* the lovingkindness, compassion and caring he has shown Naomi through Ruth. Naomi's joy and delight is not that they have the grain, although clearly food is needed, it's that Boaz has clearly signaled that he is going to honor them as his relatives, and will take care of them from now on. This calls to mind Naomi's prayer for Ruth back in chapter 1 vs. 8-9 **8 And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 May the Lord grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband."** The use of such a similar phrase here about the same *hesed*; lovingkindness that Boaz has shown to both the living and the dead seems to suggest that maybe God will use Boaz as an _____ to this prayer. That's what she's so _____ about!

And looking at all Boaz has done and has promised to do for Ruth, to be the one who _____ for her, to _____ her, to _____ her and _____ for her, _____ his mealtime and his own food with her, to arrange little favors for her without her knowing through his servants—all of this looks suspiciously like Boaz is demonstrating to Ruth that he can provide for her. It's the exact kind of demonstration that would have been expected at a _____ dinner, as was the custom in Old Testament times.

Ruth, this gentile bride, was _____ to Boaz by this unnamed servant, in chapter 2 vs. 5-7, but it is Boaz who takes the _____ and approaches Ruth, and this care and protection that Boaz has provided for Ruth points to the further relationship that's going to develop between them.

20 Again Naomi said to her, “The man is our relative, he is one of our closest relatives.”

It’s Boaz’ identity as a close relative that _____ everything else to happen in the Book of Ruth. Naomi says that Boaz is mig-gō-’ă-lê-nū one of our *Goael*, one of those who acts as _____. Now Goael was a term from Israelite family law. And, the meaning of the word Goael is to redeem. Although the meaning of the word took on the idea of *kinsman*-redeemer because in order to qualify, you had to be a close relative, the emphasis of the word is on _____. Notice by the way, that Naomi says “our close relative”. It is clear that Naomi now considers Ruth her family.

21 Then Ruth the Moabitess said, “Furthermore, he said to me, ‘You should stay close to my servants until they have finished all my harvest.’”

Ruth understood that now she _____ to Boaz’ clan. Ruth’s also letting Naomi know that Boaz told her that she can stay not only until they finish harvesting all of the fields of _____, but to stay through the _____ harvest as well.

At 2 pounds of grain each per day for Ruth and Naomi to eat, it would have only taken about 24 days of harvesting (so about a month, with taking Sabbaths off) to get enough _____ for a year. So, they likely got about 2 years’ worth of grain, if they got as much each day as Ruth got on the first day. Clearly Boaz was _____ for them!

22 Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his maids, so that others do not fall upon you in another field.”

She’s making sure that no _____ can start with one of the male servants before she can arrange things with Boaz and also that Ruth is _____ as a young unmarried maiden should in Israelite society—thus making her more eligible as a bride. So Naomi is protecting Ruth’s chastity and making sure that she’s under the same _____ as Boaz’ other maids who he is responsible for.

23 So she stayed close by the maids of Boaz in order to glean until the end of the barley harvest and the wheat harvest. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

She waited on God’s timing to see what _____ would do. So we have a careful _____ of Ruth’s time during these months. What we don’t have is an account of how many times Boaz and Ruth met for lunch during these months, or what they said, or how their relationship grew. As with our relationship with _____, so much of our growth takes place _____, where it is _____ from others.