

Acceptance in Community

Key Verse: “Now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.”
—Ruth 3:11

Selected Scripture:
Ruth 2:1-3:13
mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.”—Ruth 2:1

Now, after she met Boaz and offered to work for him, he had compassion on her and gave her food and water. Later, he allowed her to go to a field and, under his protection, she gleaned barley, so much so that she gathered in a large quantity. This was made possible due to the generosity of Boaz. Instead of dealing selfishly with Ruth, he gave directions to his servants that they purposely let a few handfuls of grain fall so that her gleanings would be greater. (vss. 14-16) “So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up,

OUR LESSONS INVOLVING

the life of Ruth can be divided into several parts. We have seen her deciding to go to a land and make those people her people; we have her serving others, resting during a period of time and, finally, being rewarded for her faithfulness. Ruth’s service began when she offered to work as a gleaner in the fields for a relative of Naomi. “Naomi had a kinsman of her husband’s, a

and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.” (Ruth 2:17,18) Ruth took the grain with her to show Naomi, and upon arriving she related the events that had taken place with regard to Boaz.

The account gives us insight into the customs of the time, and also shows us how the Lord rewarded the noble character of Ruth. She did not come to Bethlehem with great expectations and selfish motives, but out of her love for Naomi, and with a devotion to those whom she now viewed as her people. This is shown by the fact that she set out to earn a living for herself and her mother-in-law. Under Jewish law, she was permitted to gather the grain left behind as a way to help the poor and needy people. God in his kindness had mercy on her and, their hearts being free from evil, permitted all to work out for their good. Their kind reception by the people of the community, and the sympathy and kindness shown to them were great blessings. Ruth was most certainly guided by divine providence to the field of a man who was a kinsman to Naomi, and to whom she would subsequently marry. “So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son.”—chap. 4:13

It would do us well to note that the Lord’s people should find something in this story of Ruth and Boaz that would be helpful to them. We should commit our life to the Lord, and sincerely and unselfishly determine to follow the path of righteousness. Then, as with Ruth, the LORD shall be our God, and his people our people. Testing will come to us but, if we trust in the true and living God, we will see how he desires to guide us, order our steps, overrule in our affairs of life, and bring us rich blessings. “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”—Rom. 8:28 ■