

WHEN PROVIDENCE FEELS LIKE CHANCE

Ruth 2

There are moments in life that feel uncertain, unplanned, or accidental, but Scripture shows us that nothing in the life of God's people is wasted. In Ruth 2, we begin to see that God is quietly working through ordinary circumstances to accomplish His redeeming purposes.

God's provision in ordinary steps

Ruth has no control. She is a widow and a foreigner trying to find enough food to survive. So she goes out into a field, and the text tells us that she "happened" to come to the field of Boaz. What appears to be chance is actually the beginning of everything God is about to do in this story. The author uses that language deliberately to show us that God's providence is present even in the smallest details.

"The Providence of God is like a Hebrew word... it can only be read backwards" – John Flavel

As we look at Elimelech's choices, we notice that our lives become fragile when we step outside of trusting God in His goodness or timing.

Throughout Scripture, we notice God's provision for the poor, needy, and overlooked (Lev. 19, Deut. 24). Even before Boaz enters the scene, the Lord has already made provision for His people.

God's grace through an unexpected redeemer

Why would God show grace to someone like me? We tend to go in one of two directions.

Direction one: We try to prove ourselves. We bring God our performance, obedience, and effort, hoping to earn acceptance. But once grace has to be earned, it is no longer grace.

Direction two: We disqualify ourselves. We look at our sin and assume grace is not for us. But grace is for the undeserving.

Boaz sees someone made in God's image, someone who has come to take refuge under the wings of the Lord. And so he provides for her more abundantly than she could have imagined. And doesn't the Lord do the same for us?

God's hand revealed in restored hope

It does not take long for the wider story of Scripture to deepen this story of hope. God has a pattern of drawing in the unlikely, the overlooked, and the undeserving, and then using their lives to display His grace.

Boaz is not just a good man to admire. He is a shadow of a greater Redeemer. Like Ruth, we stand empty-handed before God. And yet, “the movement is not from us to Him... it is from Him to us.” In Christ, God moves toward sinners in steadfast, covenant love.

Boaz is an archetype of Jesus Christ. He takes notice. He cares for those in need. He takes others under the shadow of His wings, and He redeems. Just as Boaz redeems Ruth, so Christ redeems us.

Key Idea: God’s providential hand is working in every ordinary moment to accomplish His redeeming purposes.

Application Questions:

Looking back, can you identify a moment that once felt random but now clearly shows God’s providence? How does that shape the way you view your current circumstances?

What is the relationship between God’s sovereignty and human responsibility in this chapter? How do Ruth’s actions and God’s providence fit together?

How does the concept of *hesed* (steadfast, covenant love) show up in this chapter? Is it primarily seen in God directly, or through human agents like Ruth and Boaz?

Where might God be calling you to take a step of quiet, faithful obedience this week?

How have you seen God use ordinary moments to accomplish something meaningful in your life?