

2. Stepping into God's Provision

Ruth 2:1-23

Naomi and Ruth are now in Bethlehem - two widows trying to make ends meet.

In order to step into God's provision, you need to be willing to do 3 things.

1. Take the First Step.

Ruth 2:2: *And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, 'Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favour.'*

Israelite law made provision for the poor. They could "glean" behind the paid workers and pick up whatever they left. The work was demanding and risky, but Ruth took this first step towards creating change in her life.

This first step opened the door to **God-ordained coincidences**:

Ruth 2:3a: *So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz,*

Taking this first step opens the door for God to bring the right people into your life:

Ruth 2:5-9: ⁵ *Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, 'Who does that young woman belong to?'*

⁶ *The overseer replied, 'She is the Moabite who came back from Moab with Naomi. ⁷ She said, "Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters." She came into the field and has remained here from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter.'*

⁸ *So Boaz said to Ruth, 'My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with the women who work for me. ⁹ Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the women. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.'*

A little later:

Ruth 2:14-16: ¹⁴ *At mealtime Boaz said to her, 'Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar.'*

When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. ¹⁵ As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, 'Let her gather among the sheaves and don't reprimand her. ¹⁶ Even pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her.'

Ruth was part of Boaz's extended family. He went out of his way to take care of her.

There are people who can be a blessing in your life if you take first steps.

2. Remain Humbly Grateful.

Boaz told her she could work safely in his fields and have water whenever needed. Her response:

Ruth 2:10: *At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, 'Why have I found such favour in your eyes that you notice me – a foreigner?'*

Boaz said, basically, "I've heard good things about you". Her response...

Ruth 2:13: *'May I continue to find favour in your eyes, my lord,' she said. 'You have put me at ease by speaking kindly to your servant – though I do not have the standing of one of your servants.'*

Ruth was humbly grateful. When she said thanked him, she meant it.

If you want to see more of God's provision in your life, be more like Ruth.

3. Practice Consistent Persistence.

When Ruth asked Boaz why she had found such favour in his eyes...

Ruth 2:11-12: ¹¹ *Boaz replied, 'I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband – how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. ¹² May the LORD **repay** you for what you have done. May you be richly **rewarded** by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.'*

Ruth consistently sowed the seeds of blessing in the lives of others, and now her harvest was coming in.

Boaz used the words *repay* and *reward*.

You get "all that God has to give" in exchange for giving him "all that you have to give".

For Ruth this attitude was an everyday thing:

Ruth 2:17: *So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an **ephah**.* – a weeks' worth of barley.

So, did Ruth come back a week later? No, she was there every day... until the end of the harvest:

Ruth 2:23: *So Ruth stayed close to the women of Boaz to glean until the barley and wheat harvests were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.*

God wants each of us to develop the quality of **consistent persistence** - living each day to the best of our ability, to the glory of God.

Ruth harvested a week's worth of food on her first day in the field, but **kept on working**, consistently and persistently, making it possible for God to provide all that she needed.

Conclusion

When you take the first step and God sends blessings your way, remember to:

- Say "thank you".
- Stay humbly grateful.
- Practise consistent persistence when the blessings start.

This is how you step into God's provision.