

The Choice: *Work* or *Waste* (2:1-13)

Out of the town's view, Naomi and Ruth sat in the house contemplating their futures. Fields of opportunity were ripe before them if they were willing to reap. But between Naomi and Ruth was the threshold. Inside was every viable reason and valid excuse why they couldn't take the first step out of the door. Shame, danger, fear, inexperience, entitlement, indolence, the magnitude of the task, all said they shouldn't take the risk.

But unknown to them, outside the door were opportunities that God had "*prepared beforehand that [they] should walk in them*" (Ephesians 2:10). He was working *with them* (Mark 16:20), *in them* (Philippians 2:12-13), and *for them* (Romans 8:28), accomplishing His gracious purposes.ⁱ They must decide whether they would work with God or waste the opportunities He had provided to prosper them.

Psalms 31:19 says, "*How abundant is Your goodness that You have stored up for those who fear You, that You perform for those who take refuge in You before the children of humankind*" (LEB).

Read Ruth 2:1-7.

1. How is Boaz described in verse 1? What overall impression is given of him based on his interaction with the reapers and his foreman?ⁱⁱ
2. Naomi had undoubtedly informed Ruth of God's provision for the needy. Describe the law per Leviticus 19:9-10, 23:22, and Deuteronomy 24:19-22. (Also consider Exodus 23:10-11.)
3. How important to God is it that His people meet the needs of the poor, the stranger, the widow and orphan? Read Deuteronomy 15:7-11, Proverbs 21:13, 28:27, Matthew 25:31-46, and 1 John 3:16-18.

10. A Latin proverb says, “Providence assists not the idle.” Do you believe this is true? Why or why not? Provide an example. (Think on Genesis 24:27.)

11. Why might the author have thought it important to include the salutation between Boaz and reapers? (v.4)

12. What may have caused Ruth to stand out among the reapers?

13. What did Ruth ask of the foreman once she happened upon the field? (v.7) What does Ruth seem believe about benevolence?

14. Describe Ruth’s work ethic per verse 7.

Read Ruth 2:8-13.

15. Before he spoke with her, what measures did Boaz take to provide for and protect Ruth? (v.9)

Why was it necessary that he seek her protection?ⁱⁱⁱ

23. Thinking on their exchange, what additional characteristic can be attributed to Boaz?

In closing, Proverbs 31:31 says, “Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.”

ⁱ Wiersbe, W. (2003). *The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament History*. (p. 185). Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications.

ⁱⁱ In verse 1, the phrase *man of great wealth* or *man of standing*, literally means, “a mighty man of valor.” (Reed, J. W. (1985). *Ruth*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 422). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.) Additionally, Boaz’s name means, “in him strength” and is one of two names inscribed on the pillars of Solomon’s temple.

ⁱⁱⁱ Consider what was happening elsewhere in Israel—Judges 19.