

Seeking Refuge Under the Wings of Yahweh

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- [0 : 0 0] You know, it's amazing to me when I think about how I came to Little Log Church. Oh, it was a century ago.
- No, it was about 14 years ago, 2006. At the time, I was a bus driver in the school district. It's the only job a former pastor could get.
- I love that job, by the way. But I was also still looking for a pastorate. I'd been out of the pastorate for a couple of years and looking to get back in, seeing where God was leading.
- I was interviewing, actually, quite close to a position of associate pastor down in the Springs. And at this very timing, I first heard about Little Log Church looking for a new pastor when I was in a meeting for the bus drivers down at the bus barn.
- And one of the other bus drivers said, oh, we just, our pastor just left and we're going to be looking for a new pastor. I said, oh, what church is that? Oh, Little Log Church. I said, oh. So, as chance would have it, I was the first to hear and the first to put in my resume.
- [1 : 2 0] First shall be last, by the way, right? Our chairman of the board at the time, Colonel, when he heard that a bus driver had applied for the position for Pastor Little Log Church, said, fat chance.
- We're going to hire a bus driver. Again, the first shall be last. The last shall be first. Well, it just so happened.
- I was looking for a pastorate as this position opened up. And by coincidence, I had always had this far-off dream of pastoring a church in the mountains.
- I wasn't looking for it. But I had that kind of far-off dream. And the timing, the timing was very fortunate. Because I was just on the verge of accepting the position to the other church.
- By mere chance, Delinda just happened to check the email right after the interview. And it was an email from some guy by the name of Jeff Ball, who was an elder at Little Log Church.
- [2 : 3 9] And who was willing to meet with me about, who's Little Log Church? What kind of pastor are you looking for? If I'm going to kind of drop this other one and try this, I want to know what we're getting into.
- And it must have been fate. Because Jeff told me that Little Log Church was unique from other churches and that it was looking for a pastor who would do expository preaching.
- And of course, I asked him what he meant by that, because every church says, oh, we do expository preaching. He said, no, no, we went verse by verse. Stay in the text. Don't start in a text and go all over the place.
- Stay in a text and draw from the passage. True expository preaching, which is fairly unique today. Must have been fate.
- My lucky stars. It just so happened that I lived only three blocks from this little church. I was already in this community. What are the odds?

- [3 : 48] Well, I'm having a little fun. Was it that the stars were lined up? Was it lucky timing? I mean, when you look at all of this, was it simply just good fortune?
- Was it by accident how I heard about it? Was it by chance that Delinda got the email at the time she got the email? Is it fate? Was it coincident that I was where I was when Little Log Church was where it was at?
- Was it simply by chance that I was in the right place at the right time hoping for such a position in just such a church? What are the odds?
- Like I said, it's amazing to me when I think about how I came to this church. If there were such a thing as signs. Right?
- Gee, should I keep going down this road? I don't know. Maybe it's just a coincidence. Now, 16 years later, I can say, I think this is what God wanted.
- [5 : 02] I sometimes wonder why me, but still. Are such things like that simply chance, luck, coincidence, things that just happened?
- And as believers, as Bible readers, as those who recognize the sovereignty of God, where is God in all of this?
- These things that happen. In the story of Ruth, our author introduces a quote unquote chance meeting between Ruth and Boaz.
- Now, he's playing with us. Verse 3. He's saying, by chance, she just happened to come to that one field of all the fields.
- Remember, this is Bethlehem. This is like a patchwork. These aren't like when you go to Illinois and you have the fields that are marked off in perfect squares. Everything's perfectly.
- [6 : 00] This is Bethlehem. It's a patchwork. It's like a, what are those things that ladies make when they're, well, not just ladies. Quilts.
- Quilts. Patchwork. You know, it's kind of like that. It's like hit and miss. How does she just happen to come on a field that happens to belong to Boaz, who just gets mentioned as, oh, by the way, he's a relative.
- Oh, and he's a really good guy, by the way, too. Just so happens. In this time. Not one of those who's just simply doing what's right in his own eyes.
- So here is our author of Ruth introducing this chance meeting between Ruth and Boaz. And it is Boaz himself who, after Ruth, asks, why are you showing favor to me?
- He interprets the whole thing. He says, no, this isn't just about chance. This isn't just about, you know, maybe a budding romance.
- [7 : 02] He doesn't mention that, but I wonder if that's behind his eye thinking. Anyway, he's quite taken with Ruth. He says, no, what you are doing is you are seeking refuge under the wings of Yahweh.
- That's your real motivation. That's what's really going on. You're seeking refuge under the wings of Yahweh, the God of Israel.
- And I've been thinking about this term refuge. What does it mean to seek refuge? What is refuge? And as I was kind of putting the final thoughts on this sermon yesterday, I was sitting outside and I was in my little enclosure there.
- And suddenly this hailstorm came. I mean, it was like, exactly like that.
- I perfectly sounded it. No. And I'm thinking, oh, I'm glad I'm inside this enclosure. Because this thing would, these things would knock me out.
- [8 : 10] So when I think of refuge, we're seeking shelter from a storm as refuge. To seek refuge is to seek for safety, to seek for security.

And we're looking for something that we can trust in to protect us in the trials. And that's what Boaz is saying Ruth is doing. In the midst of all the darkness that's happened, all the bad stuff that's happened in her life, all the loss and turmoil.

Well, she says she is now seeking refuge, shelter, protection, security under the wings of God. Picture of God as a mother bird opening her wings to take her children, her brood, her little ones under her wings.

To protect them. To keep them secure. To keep them safe. That's what Ruth is looking for Yahweh to do. So remember, we looked at Act 1, Ruth chapter 1.

We saw the ruin of Naomi. We saw how all these dark shadows happened across her path. The famine and the move. The loss of a husband.

[9 : 22] Then the loss of two children. And the impact of all of that. She is bitter. And she's not just bitter. She's blaming her bitterness on God.

God has acted bitterly with me. God has taken me out full and brought me back empty. God's hand is against me.

She is a believer in Yahweh. She's an angry believer in Yahweh. It is God who is responsible for all my ruin. So we end the chapter in chapter 1 with Naomi coming back to Bethlehem saying, Don't call me Naomi.

They say, Naomi's here. Naomi's here. Don't call me Naomi, which means pleasant, lovely. Oh, the one that always had the cheerful countenance on her face. Don't call me that.

Call me Marah. Bitter. Bitter. Because I am bitter. I am angry. And God has done this to me.

[10 : 27] So now we turn the corner into chapter 2 where we have the ruin of Naomi. Now we have the refuge of Ruth. Notice at the beginning of chapter 2, Naomi has very little to say.

Ruth has a plan to go out. Naomi simply says, go, my daughter. Doesn't say, oh, be careful. Watch out. Naomi's still wrapped up and absorbed in her own pain.

Okay, go. It's not Naomi's idea to get Ruth out there. Ruth's taking the initiative. But just notice that Naomi is still wrapped up in her pain. She cannot see any hints of God's love.

And we saw in the last verse of chapter 1 that the author hints that there are two hints of God's hand already coming.

God's kindnesses. One, verse 22, Naomi said, I've come back empty. And yet the author says, so Naomi returned and Ruth the Moabite, her daughter, was with her.

[11 : 27] She's not empty. She's got Ruth. And Ruth is going to turn out to be better than seven sons. And then secondly, the timing of when they come back at the end of verse 22, they come back to the house of bread.

By the way, that's the meaning of Bethlehem. House of bread. At the beginning of barley harvest. There has been a famine in the land and now God has put bread back into the house.

So we see some hints of God's goodness, seeing relief with the hand of God. Now we look at the beginning of chapter 2, we see a couple more hints of God's grace.

And in all this dark shadow and all this bitterness and all this emptiness, God is working behind the scenes. She's got Ruth. She's there at the bread harvest.

Chapter 2, verse 1. Oh, by the way, there's this man. There's this relative. We're introducing a new character into the story.

[12 : 29] There's this man. And he's not just any man. He's a kindred. But he's also a worthy man. And that word worthy can mean mighty, can mean worthy, can mean capable, can mean wealthy.

He is an influential, worthy man. Oh, and he just happens to be from the clan of Elimelech. Not only is he a, he's not just a distant relative.

He's a relative from the same family line as Naomi's husband, Elimelech. He's a close relative. And then one more thing we see in verse 2 and 3.

Ruth goes out to glean. Let me go glean after him in whose sight I shall find favor. So it's up to, well, is she going to find someone who shows her favor?

She's going to go out. She's a nobody. She's an outsider. She's from a different race, by the way. Talk about races lately. We're going to get an insight into race relations here in Ruth 2.

[13 : 42] Here's a man who treats someone from another race. Someone who is different. Someone who is an outsider. Someone who is in the past considered an enemy.

With extraordinary grace. Grace. So she's going out though. She doesn't know that. She's going out. She's taking the risk. She's going out to glean.

And then the author tells us in verse 3, She just so happens. By chance, she comes on the field of Boaz. How lucky.

What fate. What are the odds? The stars are lined up. What a chance. So what the author means by chance is, not that this was out of some kind of luck, because obviously the author is going to show us God working behind it.

What he means is that Ruth went there having no idea of whose field it was. It was unintentional on her part. She's simply going out looking for work.

[14 : 52] She just happens to come to that field. Among all the fields. She comes to that one. How did she pick that one?

The author doesn't tell us how she picked it. Naomi was no help. Naomi didn't tell her, you know, go my daughter. Oh, oh, oh, we have a relative. Go look for his field.

She doesn't say anything about that. Naomi's still too wrapped up. She just says, okay, go my daughter. That's fine. Go ahead. Oh, by the way, women get raped out there in the field. So be careful. She doesn't tell her that either.

She just says, okay, go my daughter. You can tell Naomi's still hurting. She's still too depressed. She's still too self-absorbed to even think beyond herself. By the end of the chapter, by the way, she's going to get a little more vocal.

She's going to come alive. Because she herself is going to see wasn't by chance. So the author's telling us God is moving.

[15 : 52] God is providing. He has not, according to Naomi's perspective, left me alone. He's not really against me. He's not brought me back empty. He's not abandoned me.

Actually, he's still there. And for all of us, are you in a storm today, in a trial?

Have you suffered loss? Do you feel empty? Do you feel like God has abandoned you? Where are you seeking refuge?

Has your life become bitter? Man, it's so easy for that to happen. Things, bad things happen one after another. We don't, we can't see God in it. And it's all dark and uncertain.

That's where Naomi is at. And yet, what this story teaches us is to begin to look for the kindnesses of the Lord. Because he is there.

[16 : 58] Begin to look for hints of his sovereign grace that are, maybe it's a person that comes alongside of us. Maybe it's just the timing of something that need gets provided just at the right time.

And so, we see this. So, now let's come to scene two in chapter two, verses four through 17.

Each chapter, by the way, is an act like a play. Each act has three scenes here in Ruth. So, here in chapter two, once again, we have three scenes.

The first scene is the setup, verses one through three. Kind of, here's the setting. Here's, here's, and then beginning of verse four is the second scene where most of the action happens.

Where it is the dialogues. Once again, it's dialogues. The author's not telling us just outright what's going on. He's letting us watch and see through the voices of the people what Ruth is like and what Boaz is like.

[18 : 05] We learn from their language and their questions and answers what kind of people they are. And he tells the story. It's much more dramatic that way. It's much more personal that way. He's just letting us kind of watch the scene develop.

And then the third scene, which we won't, we'll get to next week, is kind of the summary from verses 18 to 23 in chapter two. It's the third scene. It's kind of the wrap up.

It's kind of after Ruth goes back to Naomi and reports and sees what happens. So, we're in this second scene. So, here's the heart of the chapter, verses four through 17, these dialogues.

And in these dialogues, it is revealed how Ruth, though she's going to glean, what she's really, really doing is seeking refuge under God's wings.

That's what she's doing. How she does that is by going out to the fields to glean. They have no money. They have no food. So, she's going out to find work. Simply going out to find work.

[19 : 11] So, here's the question I want to ask. Since Boaz has already told us what this is really about is seeking refuge under God's wings, the question I want to ask that I think this chapter answers is, what is distinctive about those who seek refuge under the wings of God?

What kind of people seek refuge under the wings of God? If I do that, what would be true of me if I were to seek refuge under God's wings?

What does that look like? And what the author does is he highlights two people, obviously, Ruth and Boaz. We see the character of Ruth in her humility, and we see the character of Boaz in his grace, his generosity.

Both of those reflect somebody who is seeking refuge under the wings of God. They're trusting God. They find their provision and protection and deliverance and security under God.

They're trusting him, and it causes them to act with humility and with grace. So, first of all, we see in Ruth, we see a genuine humility that comes by faith.

[20 : 28] Now, I say that again. We don't just see humility in Ruth. We see humility, a genuine humility. We can hear it in her voice and in her actions. We see a genuine humility.

But I'm adding this because I think the passage tells us this. It's a humility that comes from faith. It's a humility that comes from seeking refuge under God's wings.

From faith. From trusting God's security. It's a humility that is driven, as motivated, as moved by her faith in God.

So, here's how it unfolds. We see her plan. Ruth is an actor. Not just an actor. Not a pretender. But she acts.

She doesn't want to just sit around. She has come now with Naomi. Naomi's out of it. Naomi's discouraged, depressed. She's cycled down into her own misery.

[21 : 32] And we understand that. We're not criticizing her. We understand. She's lost everything. She's overwhelmed. And she believes in God. And then she believes that this isn't fate or accident.

This is God. So, she's suffering. But Ruth, we've already seen this, somebody unique. Ruth wants to go out and work.

So, she has a plan. Verse 2. Let me go. She's asking Naomi, what do you think? I want to go out and glean wherever I can find favor. I don't know where that will be, but I'm looking for favor.

By the way, the word favor, which happens three times in this chapter, is the word grace. I'm looking for grace. Favor. Anyone who will be kind to me.

Anyone. I'm going to a field. I'm hoping I'll go to a field where somebody will let me do this. And I know it will be a kind gesture. It will be finding favor. And the odds are against me because I'm a different color skin.

[22 : 35] I'm from a different nation. I'm an outsider. I'm obviously not one of you. And she's going to emphasize that. How do you show me favor when I'm a foreigner and I'm not one of you?

And I'm... All right? So, she's very conscious of that. Very conscious. And by the way, the author is emphasizing that by calling her, verse 2, Ruth, the Moabite.

And we're going to look at this later, but her origins, the Moabites. If you don't know where the Moabites come from, back in Genesis 19, right after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot, who survives.

Remember, Lot's wife does not survive. But Lot survives with his two daughters. Everybody's gone. They're the last ones on earth, they think. And so the daughters come up with a plan.

How are we going to have kids? Well, all we got is dad. Let's get him drunk. Bah, bah, bah, bah, bah, bah. And so Moab means from father. From father.

[23 : 44] Children from father. So even the Moabite name is a scandalous name. Now remember, this person Ruth is going to be in the lineage of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So Jesus is already going to involve outsiders. Scandalous names. People of bad reputation. Or at least the impression of bad image.

So here's this Moabite. So she wants to go find favor. She takes a step of faith.

See, I think this is part of her seeking refuge. She's going to go. This is God's land. This is the promised land. This is God's people. I've heard about this God for more than 10 years.

He's a powerful God and he keeps his promises. So I'm going to go. So she steps out. She's going to see how God provides. But it's a risk.

[24 : 51] It is a step of faith. To work in the field is dangerous. For a young woman. For a widow. For an outsider especially. For an outsider especially.

It's dangerous. She's vulnerable to physical harm. She's vulnerable to rejection. Simply because she's another race. Simply because she's an outsider.

She's not one of them. We look at them suspicious. We don't know them. She steps out to find work. And then I want you to notice.

Her posture. And where we see her humility in the way she talks. Look down at verse 6. Boaz has asked his foreman.

Whose young woman is this? He knows. She stands out. She is different. I don't know if she dresses different. Clearly she looks different. And he's asking.

[25 : 46] Who is that? Servant says. Oh by the way. She's not just the one young woman with Naomi. She's the Moabite. By the way.

Some scholars think that this foreman. Is kind of against her. Some of his language is a little bit negative. Yeah she's kind of pushy. She's kind of pushy.

What does she do? So verse 6. She's the young Moabite woman. Who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. Moab by the way. She's a Moabite. She said.

Okay she said. Please let me glean. And gather among the sheaves. After the reapers. So she came and has continued from early morning until now.

Except for a short rest. She asks. What we see in her posture. She asks permission. She's not entitled. She doesn't demand. She asks permission. May I? And then we can see her humility in it.

[26 : 47] That it's. I'll go after. I don't want to go with. I just want to go after. So I'll just pick up the leftovers. I'm content with the leftovers.

It's like the woman. Remember. Where Jesus said. You know. I can't give the bread to. The bread belongs to the children. And the woman who says. Oh. You don't give your bread to dogs.

I'll just be the little. I'll be the little house dog. That'll take the crumbs. That's good enough. This is kind of Ruth. I'll just take the leftovers. I'll take the scraps. Whatever they don't get. I'll get. Which by the way.

There is the law in Israel. In both in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. That. In order to help people who are poor. To help widows. To help those who.

Even are foreigners. That those who do their. Who reap their fields. Are not to reap the whole field. They're to leave the edges. And they're not to go over.

[27 : 47] Their field twice. So as to just. Get everything. If you drop something. Leave it. That's for the poor. And so that's. What the righteous people. Were to do. But remember.

This is the time of the judges. When everyone did. What was right in their own eyes. So you can't. You're not entitled. It's just. That's where Ruth is saying. If I can find grace.

I know these are bad times. These are. People are doing what they want. But maybe. Just maybe. There will be somebody out there. That is a righteous man. That cares about what God thinks.

Who cares about the poor. And the outsider. And even. The Moabite. The Moabite. Good night.

That might be worse than a Samaritan. By the way. Yeah. Samaritan version. In the old. In the old. Of the old testament. And then we see in verse 10.

[28 : 43] We see. We see. Her response to Boaz. Where he tells her. You know. Keep close to my women. I'll protect you.

Just stay with them. So her response to him. Verse 10. As she fell on her face. Bowing to the ground. Okay. There's humility in her posture. She's overwhelmed.

She is deeply humbled. By his. Not only that she has found favor. But. He goes beyond that. She fell on her face. Bowing to the ground. Said to him. Why have I found favor in your eyes.

That you should take notice of me. Since I am a. Foreigner. I'm a Moabite. For goodness sakes. Why would you. Be kind to me.

She's humbled and overwhelmed. You can hear it in her. She had hoped to find favor. But she's. She's actually surprised. That she found favor. She actually didn't expect it.

- [29 : 46] Not to this level for sure. And actually. There's a Hebrew phrase there. It's a play on words. You've noticed the unnoticeable. And you should take notice of me.
- Actually in Hebrew means. To notice the unnoticeable. How did you notice me? I'm a nobody. I'm unnoticeable. I'm like.
- You know. People don't notice me. I'm of that group of people. We just kind of. Avoid and ignore. Yet you noticed me. And.
- You were kind. You didn't just notice. As if in a negative way. You noticed as if. Oh compassion. Compassion grace. She's just overwhelmed.
- Who am I. That you would do this. She's in wonder. She's amazed. At the grace. That comes to her. But finally. I want you to notice. It's not just that she steps out in faith.
- [30 : 42] It's not just that she responds. In a humble posture. And with humble words. But I want you to notice. Where her. Humility comes from.
- It is a faith issue. And we know that. By the way. Boaz responds to her. She asked why. Why would you find favor. Why would you notice me.
- The unnoticeable. Verse 11. Boaz answered her. Oh you've been noticed dear. You have been noticed. Because all.
- That you have done. For your mother-in-law. Since the death of. Your husband. Has been. Totally. Reported.
- To me. People are going. Have you seen. Have you seen. Did you know. I'm all by. Yeah. But look what she's. So Boaz.
- [31 : 36] He's already heard. Extraordinary people. Make an impact. Even.
- Very. Humble. Quiet. Following. Kind. People. I mean.
- You could imagine. The conversations. About Ruth. She suffered. Her own loss. Why would she. Why would she do this. Why would she leave. Her gods. And her people.
- And her security. And her safety. And her best chance. Of getting remarried. And all of that. Why would she choose. To come. So everybody's already. Asking those same questions. And it's Boaz.
- That knows the answer. I know why she did it. It's because she loves Naomi. Oh yeah. She loves Naomi. And look what she's done. For Naomi. Of course she loves Naomi.
- [32 : 34] Does she like being around. Miserable people. And bitter people. Probably not. But she loves Naomi. But here's what she really did. Look what he says.
- In verse 12. All that you've done. I've heard. I've heard about. It's been fully reported. To me. How you left your father. Your mother. Your native land.
- And came to a people. You did not know before. And then he prays for her. This is a prayer. Verse 12. Boaz actually prays for her. You want to know why I'm favorable to you?
- Because I've heard about you. And it's not. It's not because of what you've done. It's not that you earned this. I see what you did. But. But. Here's why I know you did it.
- Here's your motivation. May the Lord repay you. For what you have done. And full reward given to you by the Lord. Why did you do it?
- [33 : 31] Because it's the Lord. Yahweh. The God of Israel. Under whose wings. You have come to take refuge. That's your motivation. That's why you did it.
- That's what really moved you. That's why you left your father. And your mother. You left everything. Just like Jesus says. We leave everything. To follow him. You've done the same thing. You've left everything.

To follow this God. Remember we asked the \$100,000 question last week. Why would she do it? Why would she follow a God.

Who brings bitterness into the lives of his followers. When she's seen what happened to Naomi. Why would she still choose to follow this God? Because for 10 years she'd heard all the stories.

She'd heard about Abraham. Isaac. Jacob. Joseph. Judah. Moses. Joshua. She'd heard all about it. This is a God who keeps his promises.

[34 : 31] Oh he doesn't make everything rosy and you know perfect all the time. No he's a God who loves his people and he disciplines his people. And he. But he always keeps his word. He's a God who loves his people.

He wants to follow the world. He wants to follow the world. And by the way when he went to Egypt he vanquished all those gods. When he went into the promised land he vanquished all those gods. So there's no God like Yahweh.

So she's heard all that. So she wants that God. Even though it comes with some hardship. Even though it comes with some misery and some hurt. She wants that God because that God is strong enough to keep his promises.

He's not just a good God that wants to give good things. But isn't strong enough to give the good things. He is a good God who is powerful enough to do good things.

And he will always do good things by the end of the storm. She has trusted in that God. And so he prays for her. And by the way it's interesting the Hebrew word in verse 12 where he says the Lord repay you.

[35 : 36] Literally it's the Lord shalom you. Shalom. We heard that word? It's one Hebrew word we've probably heard. Shalom. Usually means peace. Usually means peace.

At its root it means completeness. It means fullness. Shalom. May your life be full. May your life be complete.

So here the translators have may the Lord repay you. May the Lord bring fullness into you for what you have done. And a full reward. A fullness to you by Yahweh the God of Israel.

Because you have sought refuge under his wings. You have taken the step of faith to trust him and to hope in him. You're vulnerable but you've taken the step of faith.

And so this is humility that comes from faith. And again we see her response in verse 13. She says, I have found favor. I found grace in your eyes.

[36 : 36] My Lord. Remember she's still down on the ground. She's still prostrate before him. She's still humbled and overwhelmed. I found favor in your eyes. My Lord. You have comforted me and spoken kindly to me.

Watch the last phrase. Here's the humility. Though I am not one of your servants. I don't deserve it.

I don't expect it. She doesn't go, Yeah, yeah, I did all the right stuff. I should get this. No, she's still, No. I'm not one of your servants.

Why did you treat me so kindly? Why would you come for me and I'm a nobody? And I expect you because of the color of my skin. I expect you because I'm an outsider to, You know, rebuff me or be rough or abuse or whatever.

You know, like we see happen. No. Someone who is seeking refuge under the wings of God doesn't treat other people like that. Because they've received grace, they're gracious to others.

[37 : 46] So what does it mean to seek refuge under God's wings? Remember, it's a picture. Like a mother bird protecting her young.

So it's like us going to God looking for that protection. Here's a couple of Psalm descriptions of the very same phrase under the wings of God. In Psalm 91, He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

I will say to the Lord, My refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust. See, so refuge is an expression of trust.

For, why do I trust in Him? For He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you. He will cover you with His pinions and under His wings you will find refuge.

There's that phrase. Under His wings you will find refuge. You'll find protection, deliverance, shelter. His faithfulness is a shield to guard you.

[38 : 59] See, that's what that's about. Again, Psalm 36. The psalmist says, How precious is your steadfast love, O God, that children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

There's that picture again. They take refuge in the shadow of your wings. What does that mean? They feast on the abundance of your house and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

There's a picture. For with you is the fountain of life. In your light do we see light. O continue your faithful, steadfast love to those who know you, your righteousness to the upright of heart.

What does it mean to seek refuge under God's wings? It means to find shelter in Him, protection in Him, provision from Him, deliverance from the storm. And why do we seek refuge?

Because we know He can give it. Because we trust that He will provide it. We rely on Him. This reminded me of the statement Jesus said.

[40 : 12] It doesn't use the same words, but I think it's the same meaning. When He said to the crowd, Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Learn from Me, for I am humble, and I will give you rest for your soul. He's talking about that deeper rest, that deeper refuge.

I will give you refuge. I will give you provision and protection and shelter and security. Those of us who follow Jesus Christ have known that. We have known that.

It's a peace that passes understanding, right? So, what kind of people seek refuge under the wings of God? First of all, in Ruth we see it's people who have genuine humility that comes from faith.

Faith that God is a refuge and a provider and a protector. We see a second character brought out by the author, this new guy by the name of Boaz.

[41 : 17] He's introduced to us in verse 1 as a relative, a worthy man. But what really stands out is His dialogue with Ruth. And through His dialogue, we see that He's not just a worthy man, He's a gracious man.

He's the one she finds favor in, grace in. And He's not just a gracious man, He's a generously gracious man. So, in Boaz, we see generous grace that foreshadows Christ.

Remember, this Old Testament story isn't a story to itself. It's a story that's in the context of a bigger story. It's the story of the Old Testament. We're going to see by the end of the book of Ruth, oh, this story wasn't just about Naomi and Ruth and Boaz because the last name in the book is the name David.

And all of a sudden, oh, that story got bigger. Oh, that's about the line of David. That's about the king that would come. And then, of course, it's not just about the Old Testament story.

It's about the whole story of the whole Bible, which is one big story about God's grace coming to those whose lives are ruined by sin.

[42 : 31] And so, Boaz foreshadows. He reminds us ahead of time of what grace really looks like. He's a guy that's going to look like the real gracious man to come, Jesus.

So we say foreshadow. Remember a shadow? We're not bright enough light. Shadow? I wish you could see this. So imagine a bright light coming on my hand here, and you wouldn't see the color of my hand, but you'd see the outline of my hand.

So a shadow doesn't give you all the detail. It doesn't give you all the color. It simply gives you the outline. And what we see in Boaz is a foreshadowing. He's an outline of what Jesus is like.

He's a form, just like Abraham was, just like Joseph was, just like Moses was, just like David would be, there are forms of Christ. They're not Christ themselves, but they remind us.

Oh yeah, that's how Jesus acts. Boaz reminds me of Jesus. But of course, he came before Jesus, so he's fore-reminding. No, you can't fore-remind, can you?

[43 : 37] If you're God, I guess you can, okay. All right, anyway. He foreshadows Christ. So we see this in a couple of ways.

Here in verse eight, first of all, we see the conversation start between Boaz and Ruth. And by the way, grace is responding to humility.

Because he's gonna respond. He sees her humility. He sees her kindness. He sees her sacrifice. And grace is like attracted to humility.

And I think that's a biblically true statement. God's grace is attracted to our humility, right? God is opposed to the proud, but he gives grace to the humble. He's looking for the humble.

Who are the humble people? Because I want to pour out grace on them. Okay, and that's what Boaz does. He sees the humility, and he's attracted to Ruth's humility. By the way, as we see the story go along, he's attracted to Ruth in other ways too.

[44 : 37] But that's not to get yet out of ourselves. But we wonder if this part is part of what's already drawing him to her. And he doesn't make moves, but you could tell by when she makes the move.

Woo! Yeah, he's good. Okay. It's not like he hasn't thought about it before. He just kind of said, oh, not gonna happen. All right, sorry. So first we see his grace in his provision.

Verse 8. After he finds out who she is, she's the one that came back with Naomi. So verse 8, he comes to Ruth specifically.

Here's the dialogue. Now listen, my daughter. He calls her a tender name. Now listen, my daughter. Do not go glean in another field or leave this one.

Don't leave. Don't leave. Which maybe hints that she was on the verge of leaving because maybe the way the foreman had treated her. Maybe the way the men had already treated her.

[45 : 36] And he's stepping in and going, don't leave. Please don't leave. I don't want you to leave. Don't go glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close.

Stay close to my young women. Cling to my women. It's the same word that we saw in chapter 1 where Ruth clings to Naomi. Cling to my young women.

Stay right close with them. Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping. She may not know a lot about how to reap in Israel, so he's saying, just follow them. They'll show you what to do.

Just go with them. And then, keep close. Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping and go after them. Don't go anywhere else.

This is all you need. Please set your mind at ease. Follow my maids. He invites them. And what he's doing is treating her like family.

[46 : 32] He talks about his maids twice. Stay with my maids. Follow my maids. You're part of us now. Don't go anywhere else. You're part of us. I'm not just talking about today.

I'm talking about tomorrow. No, you come back every day. Every day. Every day. You got a place here. You got a friend in me. That could be a song. All right, so he's got protection.

Grace. Even though she's an outsider. Even though she's a Moabite. Even though she's another race. Grace is not about race.

Grace is given generously regardless of anyone's background. And we see that coming through in this story.

She keeps bringing up, I'm a foreigner. I'm not one of yours. I'm going to treat you just like family. I'm going to treat you just like my own. And it's going to... That's just the start.

[47 : 36] Then he goes on, verse 9. By the way, have I not told the men not to touch you? And what I say goes, these men, I guarantee, will not lay a hand on you.

They will not. You are so safe. You are so secure. Don't you even put it in your mind. You just gather. You just gather. You just go find them. Find what you're looking for here.

And by the way, when you're thirsty... Now this is very extraordinary. When you're thirsty, go get a drink. We're thinking, okay, yeah, no, that's just hospitality.

No, no, no. This is not how it was done. You're the foreigner. You go draw the water. My men will drink. You want to work in my field? You're the foreigner. You need to earn your way in here.

This is my family. Water's for my family. You go draw so my men can drink. No. Not only will the young men not touch you, the young men are going to draw water for you. Yeah, I'm taking care of you.

[48 : 46] You're safe. You're protected. I'm a foreigner. I don't care. I don't care.

You're humble, and that attracts me. That brings grace. God protects. Grace protects and removes fear.

And then he's not done. There's more. We come to this luncheon in verse 14. Now comes lunch. How'd they have lunch? They had lunch. Well, did Naomi bring a snack for lunch?

Did she bring water? We don't know any of that stuff. But it didn't matter, and she never would have to from the future, because now, if you need a drink, just go get a drink from what they draw. And by the way, you're welcome at our meals.

So he invites her, verse 14, at mealtime, Boaz said to her, come, come here. I'm sure as an outsider, she's like, okay, okay, maybe I can eat some of these barley, you know.

[49 : 51] Who knows what she had? Come, come, come. Eat some bread. Dip your morsel in the wine. So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed her.

Literally, in Hebrew, he served her. He served her. He served her. That's backwards. She should serve him.

No, he's the grace. He's the giver. He served her. Roasted grain. And she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some leftover.

Does that sound familiar, by the way? They ate until they were satisfied. And by the way, there was leftovers. One time, there was 12 baskets left over. Another time, there were seven baskets. Does it remind you of anybody, somebody who provides and gives so that there's leftovers, and they're totally satisfied?

She's going to go home with doggy bags, or barley bags, or whatever you want to call them. What do I do with my... Oh, I'm a mess up here.

[50 : 53] Excuse me. I don't know why. I don't... I don't... You know, every time I preach, it's like it loosens up everything. I'm so sorry.

Sorry if that's disruptive. So he does more than is expected. He invites her to a meal. He includes her as one of the family. He includes her instead of excluding her.

He treats her no different than anyone else. He's... Well, you might say he's being a little bit more special privilege to her. It's kind of like he can't do enough. Because then in verse 15, then what does he do?

He's still not done. He's provided. He's protected. He's given her lunch. Oh, wait. There's more. Verse 15.

When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men saying, Hey, guys, let her glean even among the sheaves. That's a no-no.

[51 : 52] Among what the women have already pulled out and stacked over there, let her do that. I know she doesn't know any better. Let her do it. And when you let her do it, by the way, do not correct her.

Do not shame her. Do not humiliate her. Don't say a word. Just go. Good. Let her do it. And not even enough still, verse 16, also pull out some.

It's kind of like, you know, when you're trying to encourage your little child and they're grown up and you're just like, Oh, what'd you find? Oh, what'd you find? Let's play hide and seek.

Oh, you found me. You know, it's kind of like he's just being this kind parent, just like pull some out, just encourage her. It's hard work. His generosity.

He goes more than expected. He pulls out the extra. He gives her special privileges. And by the way, did you see how much she gathered? Verse 17.

[52 : 55] So she gleaned in the field until evening. She worked hard all day. It wasn't an off. It wasn't a kind of a, he didn't just give her something for nothing. She worked. She earned it. She did the work.

So she gleaned the field until evening. She beat out what she had gleaned. So you take the heads and you beat it out and then you separate that. And that's your, that's your reaping your fruit. And it was about an ephah of barley.

Can you believe it? An ephah. You don't seem amazed. You know how much an ephah is? It's, it's, instead of going to the store, you know, and you get, you get four rolls of toilet paper, you go to Costco and you get 50 rolls of toilet paper, right?

It's like going to Costco. That's an ephah. An ephah is the same as 10 omers. 10 omers.

One omer was a jar of what they put the, they put the manna in the jar and put it into the ark. That's one. So 10 jars.

[54 : 02] About 29 pounds. 22 liters. 29 pounds. That's a pretty big sack to be loading home. Plus the doggy bag.

Right? Right? And she's going to show up at Naomi's door, and Naomi's going to go, boing. Where did you go? She's going to come alive.

All of a sudden, Naomi, who doesn't want to talk much, now got lots of questions. Where'd you go? Where'd you find favor? Boaz! Woo! You know, then it's like, okay, we're going to get you married, girl.

All right, no. Sorry, that's a modern translation of chapter three. Okay. Yeah, romance comes in the next chapter.

So as I said, Boaz foreshadows the grace of Jesus. He's giving, and he keeps giving, and he gives more, and he gives beyond what's expected. He gives even lavishly.

[55 : 09] And that's how God gives. Remember how Paul says it in Ephesians chapter one? He talks about this grace, grace, grace of God. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Now he's going to number them off. How has he given to us?

How has he graced us? How has God been generous to us? Well, one, even as he chose us, he chose us. You didn't choose him. He chose you. But I'm a nobody.

Yeah, he chose you. He chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we be holy and blameless before him. In love, oh, he did more. In love, he predestined us to adoption.

Not only chose us, but he adopted us as his own sons through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace with which he has blessed us in the beloved.

[56 : 10] More in him, we have redemption through his blood. So we're not just chosen and adopted. We're redeemed, which means we're forgiven. The forgiveness of our trespasses, not just our errors, our trespasses, our, our, our, we, there's the line and we pass it.

We intentionally sin. He forgives those kind of sins, not just the, oh, I made a mistake kind of sin. How did he do that? According to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will.

So he didn't just choose us and adopt us and then redeem us and forgive us. He's also telling us what his plan is. He's revealing the mystery of his will according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ.

And by the way, he's not done yet. He's still going to give more. In him, we have obtained an inheritance. Boy, that sounds like Boaz.

Pull out extra stuff. Don't tell. Come and eat. You know, it's just more, more, more. Oh, I got more. I got more to give. That's what God has done to us in Christ.

[57 : 34] God's promise to us. It's stated in the Old Testament, stated in the New Testament. God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

So we see in that statement, God is both just, and God is merciful. God is God. He's opposed to the proud. So the proud person, you aren't going to get any help from God.

He's opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. He lifts up the lowly. Those who are humble, those who recognize who they are before God, those who have a sense of unworthiness, just like Ruth, who had a sense of, but I'm a nobody.

Why would you be kind to me? God, why would you be kind to me? I don't deserve this. I don't. Why would you hear my prayer? God gives grace to the humble.

What's a humble person like? Let me finish with just a short parable that Jesus gives about, what does it mean to be proud? What does it mean to be humble? And who's the humble person?

[58 : 48] In Luke 18, he told the parable, to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous. They're, I got it all. And treated others with contempt. They think they're good.

And they treat others as nobodies and less than human. That's the proud. So here's the parable. Two men went up to the temple to pray. One is a Pharisee, and the other one is a tax collector.

The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus, God, I thank you that I'm not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, Moabites. No, he didn't say Moabites.

Or even this tax collector. Oh, yeah, this poor pitiful guy over here. I thank you that I'm not like that. I fast twice a week.

I give tithes of all that I get. Yay! I'm super guy. As if he thinks he can earn God's grace. And then Jesus says, but the tax collector, standing far off, not close, by far off, he doesn't feel worthy, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven.

[59 : 55] Can't even lift up his eyes. Beat his breast, saying, God, be merciful. Be merciful to me.

Be sinner. Be sinner. And then Jesus makes this remarkable statement. Jesus said, I tell you, this man, this man went down to his house justified.

Wait a minute, he just said he was a sinner. No, he's justified. Why? Because he was humble. He's humble. He recognized who he is. He went to this house justified rather than the other one.

Why? For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled. And whoever humbles himself will be exalted. genuine humility comes by faith.

It meets generous grace of Jesus Christ. that is seeking refuge under the wings of God. Let us pray. Father, we thank you for your word.

[61 : 03] We thank you for this marvelous display of grace and kindness. We thank you, Lord, for what we see in Ruth, her humility, her true recognition, her unexpectation.

And then we thank you, Lord, that we see you in this man, Boaz, this man who did not do just what was right in his own eyes, but did what was right in your eyes and had compassion on this outsider, on this Moabite, on this one of dark past.

And we thank you, Lord, that we see ourselves as that one who does not expect to get grace, who does not expect to be treated with kindness.

And yet you do that. So, Father, develop the humility in us and as well develop the grace in us as those who have received grace can give grace.

These things we pray in Christ's name. Amen.