

Just in Time for Harvest

Scripture Reading — Ruth 1

Naomi returned from Moab . . . arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning. — Ruth 1:22

Around the world today, tens of thousands of people live as refugees, foreigners in a country not their own. They often face a difficult life, cut off from familiar people and places and dependent on others for daily provisions.

Naomi and Ruth were in the land of Israel in search of a new life. As outsiders and widows, they were doubly vulnerable by the standards of the day. The beginning of their story is filled with heartache and sorrow. Having lost husbands and homes, how would they provide for themselves?

But God had arranged to take care of all that. His plan for their lives was being worked out. Though Naomi saw only God's hand of misfortune at this point, the first hopeful note in the book observes that she and Ruth came to Bethlehem at the start of the barley harvest. This is significant because it recalls that God had arranged to bless vulnerable people through the generosity of farmers who had more than enough.

Naomi and Ruth may not have realized it, but God was at work already to arrange their arrival at just the time when he had provided the resources to show his care for them. And in providing for physical needs, God shows his commitment to save vulnerable sinners through Christ (see Philippians 3:20-21).

How can you use God's resources to show his care to -others today?

Prayer

Loving God, thank you for caring for vulnerable people. As you have compassion on us as sinners, help us to show compassion to others. Amen.

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