

Ruth 2:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

Analysis

Ruth's response demonstrates profound humility: '**Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground**'—full prostration showing deepest respect and gratitude. Her question—'**Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?**'—uses the key term *chen* (grace/favor). She recognizes Boaz's kindness as unmerited favor, not earned rights. The Hebrew *nokriyah* (stranger/foreigner) emphasizes her outsider status, lacking rights or claims. Ruth marvels that Boaz would 'take knowledge of' (*lehakkireni*)—acknowledge, recognize, or pay attention to—someone with no social standing. Her amazement at grace received foreshadows the gospel: Gentiles marveling that God would adopt them into His family despite having 'no claim' on His favor. Grace by definition is undeserved; Ruth grasps this theological reality.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern social hierarchies rigidly separated classes and ethnic groups. Foreigners, particularly Moabites (historically Israel's enemies), typically received suspicion and contempt rather than kindness. Ruth's prostration reflected standard protocol when social inferiors addressed superiors, particularly wealthy landowners. Her question about 'finding grace' uses covenant language found throughout Scripture when the vulnerable appeal to the powerful for undeserved mercy. The concept of 'taking knowledge of' someone implied elevating them to

attention and concern—the opposite of ignoring or dismissing them as beneath notice. Ruth correctly identified Boaz's treatment as exceptional, not standard protocol. Her humility here contrasts with modern entitlement mentality that demands rights rather than receives grace with gratitude.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Ruth's amazed gratitude for grace challenge contemporary attitudes of entitlement to God's blessings?
2. What does her humble recognition of being a 'stranger' teach about approaching God without claims on His favor?

Interlinear Text

וְתִּשְׁמַח אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְתִּתְפַּלֵּל
Then she fell H5307 וְתִּשְׁמַח H5921 חֹזֶה H6440 פָּנֶיךָ H7812 וְתִשְׁמַח H776 אֶת־יְהוָה
and said H559

מִדְעָה אֶל־יְהוָה
H413 H4069 unto him Why have I found H4672 grace H2580 in thine eyes H5869

לְבַקְרֵב נִיְמָה
H5234 that thou shouldest take knowledge H595 אֶת־אֶתְכֶם
of me seeing I am a stranger H5237

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 25:23 (Parallel theme): And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,

Romans 12:10 (Parallel theme): Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

Luke 1:48 (Parallel theme): For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Luke 1:43 (Parallel theme): And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

Ruth 2:13 (Parallel theme): Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

2 Samuel 19:28 (Parallel theme): For all of my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king: yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king?

2 Samuel 9:8 (Parallel theme): And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?