

Ruth 2:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

Analysis

Boaz pronounces blessing: **'The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust'**. The phrase 'recompense thy work' (yeshalem YHWH pa'olekh) prays that Yahweh will repay Ruth's covenant loyalty. The word shalem means to make complete, pay fully, or restore—Boaz prays for comprehensive divine reward. The phrase 'full reward' (maskoret shlemah) emphasizes completeness—not partial payment but abundant recompense. The beautiful image **'under whose wings thou art come to trust'** uses kena-payiv (wings), often translated as the wings of God providing shelter and protection (Psalm 17:8; 36:7; 57:1; 91:4). This bird imagery depicts God as mother hen protecting chicks—intimate, tender, fiercely protective. Ruth has fled to Yahweh's refuge, trusting His covenant protection.

Historical Context

The metaphor of God's 'wings' providing shelter appears throughout Scripture, particularly in Psalms. Ancient Near Eastern art sometimes depicted deities with wings symbolizing protection, though Israel's aniconic faith forbade divine images. The wings imagery connects to the cherubim's wings over the ark of the covenant, representing God's protective presence. Boaz's blessing invokes God's special care for those who trust Him, particularly vulnerable foreigners who abandon former gods to seek Yahweh's protection. This blessing proved prophetic—God's 'full reward' included not just physical provision but incorporation into the messianic

line. Ruth's trust in Yahweh ultimately positioned her as great-grandmother of David and ancestress of Christ—a reward beyond imagination. The irony: Boaz prayed for God to reward Ruth, not knowing he would be the human instrument of that divine provision.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the image of seeking refuge under God's wings provide comfort during seasons of vulnerability and uncertainty?
2. What does Ruth's example teach about trusting God's recompense even when immediate circumstances appear difficult?

Interlinear Text

יְשַׁלֵּם	יְהוָה	פְּעֹלָתְךָ	וְתֵי י	מִשְׁכָּרְתְּךָ	שְׂלֵמָה	מִעַם
recompense	The LORD	thy work	H1961	reward	and a full	H5973
H7999	H3068	H6467		H4909	H8003	
יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל	אֲשֶׁר	בָּאת	לְחַסּוֹת	תַּחַת
The LORD	God	of Israel	H834	thou art come	to trust	H8478
H3068	H430	H3478		H935	H2620	
כְּנֶפֶי:						
under whose wings						
H3671						

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 36:7 (Faith): How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

Psalms 91:4 (Faith): He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

Psalms 17:8 (Parallel theme): Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

Psalms 63:7 (Parallel theme): Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

Psalms 61:4 (Faith): I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

Hebrews 6:10 (References God): For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Hebrews 11:26 (Parallel theme): Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

1 Samuel 24:19 (References Lord): For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.

Ruth 1:16 (References God): And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

Psalms 57:1 (Faith): Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.