

Ruth 2:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.

Analysis

Ruth's diligent labor produces results: '**So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley**'. Working from morning until evening, Ruth gathered approximately an ephah (about 22 liters or half a bushel) of barley—an extraordinary amount for one day's gleaning, demonstrating both her industry and Boaz's secret generosity. Normally gleaners might gather only a fraction of this amount. The large quantity reveals how abundantly Boaz provided through his workers' deliberate dropping of grain, though Ruth doesn't yet realize the source of her blessing.

Historical Context

An ephah of barley represents roughly 10 days worth of grain for one person, showing the abundance of Ruth's harvest. Archaeological studies of ancient gleaning practices suggest typical gleaners might gather only 1-2 kilograms daily—Ruth's harvest was many times normal, though she likely attributed it to hard work rather than Boaz's orchestration. The process of beating out grain separated kernels from chaff, requiring additional labor but necessary for the grain to be usable.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does this verse illustrate God's providence working through human kindness and natural means?
2. What does Ruth's hard work combined with Boaz's provision teach about the relationship between human effort and divine blessing?

Interlinear Text

אָשָׁר	אִתְּ	וַתַּחֲבֹט	בַּשְׂדֵךְ	עַד	בַּבְּעֵד	לְקַטֵּה	תָּהֲלַל	בַּתְּ	לְקַטֵּה
So she gleaned	in the field	H5704	until even	H6153	and beat out	H2251		H853	H834
H3950	H7704								

שָׁעֲרִים:	שָׁעַר	בְּעֵד	כִּאִיְפְּ	תִּיהְ	לְקַטֵּה	תָּהֲלַל	בַּתְּ	לְקַטֵּה
So she gleaned	H1961	and it was about an ephah		H374			of barley	
H3950							H8184	

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 31:27 (Parallel theme): She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.