

Merciful Coincidences!

Why are God's workings not always evident in our lives? If we want to answer this question, we first need to know how God works. Without us knowing it, God might be busy in our present situations. This episode will provide more insight into the way God works in our lives.

Ruth 2 (story)

¹Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz.

Tension: Will Ruth find food?

²And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, 'Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor.' Naomi said to her, 'Go ahead, my daughter.'

Relief of tension: Boaz is sympathetic towards Ruth

⁸So Boaz said to Ruth, 'My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls. ⁹Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the girls. I have told the men not to touch you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.'

¹⁰At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She exclaimed, 'Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?'

¹¹Boaz replied, 'I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. (NIV)

The solution to Naomi's problems lies in ordinary events. Nothing sensational happens. Ruth takes the initiative by asking her mother-in-law if she could glean some grain in the fields of someone who will be sympathetic towards her. She takes the initiative and accepts responsibility for her situation. After this, a few events happen—things that one would normally call "coincidences." She "coincidentally" goes to the land that belongs to Boaz, who "coincidentally" is Naomi's only relative—and also very rich. It is also a "coincidence" that he is unmarried and shows interest in Ruth, a woman from a foreign land. "Coincidentally" Boaz arrives on the day she is harvesting the leftover grain. It is a "coincidence" that he notices her and asks questions about her.

In the next episode, we read that Boaz shows mercy towards her. This episode teaches us that we can solve our problems if we follow Ruth's example, namely to take responsibility for our situation and be willing to do something about it. Without our noticing it, God uses people and ordinary events to bring about relief. We often contribute this to "coincidence," but in actual fact it is God who is working behind the scenes.



Thank You, Lord, for accompanying me during the dark times of my life.

Coincidence is God's way of staying anonymous.

—Author unknown