

# Faithful Obedience and God's Providence

Waiting for God's timing is difficult, especially when it feels like everything in life is falling apart at once. We might feel angry, frustrated, maybe even abandoned by God. His seeming silence may leave us wondering if he cares. Some of us might feel helpless, wondering if there is anything we can do while we wait for his timing, or will doing something be forcing his hand or stepping outside his will? Turning to the book of Ruth provides answers and encouragement for these pressing questions. As the story of Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi continues, we discover a clear demonstration of God's providence and what God can do with the faithfulness of ordinary people. The source of God's provision and the way he answers our prayers just might surprise us!

**AWARENESS** Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- How would you describe God's providence? What does it look like in your life?
- What is obedience and why do we sometimes struggle with it?



**LISTEN TO THE EPISODE:** [Faithful Obedience and God's Providence](#)

**READ** [Ruth 2](#)

**REFLECTION** After listening, consider the following questions:

- Hosts Dave Bast and Scott Hoezee observe that Boaz is a landowner, rich...but not overly rich, who works alongside his hired hands. When Boaz is introduced in [Ruth 2:1](#), different biblical translations offer varying meanings of the Hebrew phrase describing him:
  - English Standard Version: "worthy"
  - New International Version: "man of standing"
  - New Revised Standard Version: "prominent rich man"
  - King James Version: "mighty man of wealth"
- In her book, *The Gospel of Ruth: Loving God Enough to Break the Rules*, Carolyn Custis James suggests the Hebrew phrase has a stronger meaning. Something closer to "might and valor." The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines valor as "*strength of mind or spirit that enables a person to encounter danger with firmness; personal bravery.*" What do all these meanings communicate to us about Boaz? Why do you think it was important to the biblical writer to communicate this about Boaz's character?
- Has someone ever praised you for something that was no big deal to you? Maybe you just felt you were doing what you were supposed to do/what was right/what you felt any person would do. Where have you seen God do big things from simple acts of faithfulness?

- Are there any of God's laws you find challenging to obey? How might your simple obedience in this area allow you to partner with God in his greater work of providing and caring for his people? How might we miss these opportunities if we follow the letter of the law, but do not keep in mind the spirit of the law?
- Has anything about the book of Ruth surprised you so far? Are there things that maybe you haven't noticed or realized in previous readings?

## **RELATED PASSAGES** for further study

[Leviticus 23:22](#), [Matthew 25:31-46](#), [Matthew 22:34-40/Mark 12:28-34](#)

## **CONCLUSION**

Read [Mark 12:28-34](#). How can you grow in faithfulness to this commandment? Think about the spirit of the law. Then think about places and people you encounter over the week. In prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes and heart, revealing to you any personal resistance that might be keeping you from following God fully with faithful obedience. If you're willing, consider also asking him to make you a vessel of his providence.

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*Printed on August 27, 2025*