

## RUTH (Teacher's Edition)

### Part One: Ruth's Love Is Demonstrated (1:1-2:23)

- I. Ruth's Decision to Remain with Naomi 1:1-18
  - A. Ruth's Need to Remain with Naomi 1:1-5
  - B. Ruth's Opportunity to Leave Naomi 1:6-15
  - C. Ruth's Choice to Remain with Naomi 1:16-18
- II. Ruth's Devotion to Care for Naomi 1:19-2:23
  - A. Ruth and Naomi Return to Bethlehem 1:19-22
  - B. Ruth Gleans for Food 2
    - 1. Boaz Meets Ruth 2:1-7
    - 2. Boaz Protects Ruth 2:8-16
    - 3. Boaz Provides for Ruth 2:17-23

### Part Two: Ruth's Love Is Rewarded (3:1--4:22)

- I. Ruth's Request for Redemption by Boaz 3
  - A. Naomi Seeks Redemption for Ruth 3:1-5
  - B. Ruth Obeys Naomi 3:6-9
  - C. Boaz Desires to Redeem Ruth 3:10-18
- II. Ruth's Reward of Redemption by Boaz 4
  - A. Boaz Marries Ruth 4:1-12
  - B. Ruth Bears a Son, Obed 4:13-15
  - C. Naomi Receives a New Family 4:16
  - D. Ruth Is the Great-grandmother of David 4:17-22

### AUTHOR-

Tradition holds that Samuel wrote this book. That is a possibility because Samuel anointed David king over Israel. Thus Samuel considered David to be king even though the repudiated Saul was still ruling when Samuel died; and if penned by Samuel, the reference in the book to David, as a figure of significance, would be quite in order.

### WHEN THE BOOK WAS WRITTEN-

We really do not know when this book was written. The historical setting of the book is laid in the time of the Judges (Ruth 1:1), and it seems to have been composed about the same time as the longer work. Ruth occurs during the period of the judges, as a part of those events that occur between the death of Joshua and the rise of Samuel's influence (between 1150-1100 B.C.) and covers a span of 12 years.

## ABOUT THE BOOK-

The Book of Ruth tells the story of a Moabite woman who married into a family of Israelites. But her husband and all the other men of the family died, leaving Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi in a desperate situation. Ruth accompanied Naomi back to Judah, where they scratched out an existence by gathering leftover grain in the fields. This led to Ruth's encounter with Boaz, a wealthy Israelite and distant kinsman of Naomi, who eventually married the Moabite woman. Their son became the **father of David's father**, making Ruth and Boaz the great-grandparents of Judah's most famous king. In this awesome story, certain Biblical terms, laws and customs come into play, which need discussion to help better understand the underlying point being made.

Three ideas predominate, and they need to be understood: "**kinsman-redeemer**" (**go'el**- a word that occurs 13 times in the book!), "**leviratic marriage**", and "**the redemption of the land**".

Elimelech and Naomi were of the tribe of Judah and from the city of Bethlehem, where they had rights to ancestral property. But when Naomi's husband and sons died, she could regain her property through the two legal customs available to her: the "leviratic marriage" or "the redemption of the land". The "leviratic marriage" custom required the **nearest relative of a deceased man** to marry his widow (Duet. 25:5-10). Any offspring from this union carried the **name** and **inheritance** of the former husband. Since Naomi was beyond childbearing years, her daughter-in-law Ruth became **her substitute** in marriage and bore a son to perpetuate the family name. Boaz accepted the obligations of both customs: as the kinsman-redeemer he redeemed the land (**legally cleared the land of all further claims**) and as a responsible male relative he married Ruth and fathered a son to continue the family name.

The whole concept of the kinsman-redeemer (go'el) is an important portrayal of the **work of Jesus**. The go'el must 1) be **related by blood** to those he redeems (Jesus shared in flesh and blood with us- Heb. 2:14, 15!) 2) must be able to pay the **price of redemption** (Jesus' blood- 1 Peter 1:18, 19) 3) must be **willing** to redeem (John 10:15, 18: Heb. 10:7).

The three-fold purpose of this book, which may be viewed as a supplement and introduction to **1 & 2 Samuel**, may be considered:

(1) to provide part of **the lineage of David** (1 & 2 Samuel give no account of David's ancestors), (2) to show **God's grace** in welcoming Gentiles into the family of God, and (3) to demonstrate the function of the kinsman-redeemer as a **type, or figure**, of the work of the **Messiah**.

### **A BASIC ASSESSMENT OF RUTH (THE BASIC THEME)-**

The events in the book occurred at a dark time in Israel's history. This was a period when the nation lapsed again and again into worship of false gods. What a contrast this is to Ruth, who remained faithful to God, although she was a Moabite by birth-**one considered an alien** by God's Chosen People. Ruth's experience is a dramatic example of many things. As a Gentile she had no place in God's covenant, but her **hunger for the living God redeemed her**. What is especially amazing about this relates to a key term in the story: "**kindness**," meaning covenant loyalty (1:8; 2:20; 3:10). Ruth and Boaz illustrate what covenant righteousness and **loyalty** are in an era when "everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). This loyalty is expressed in the same terms as those describing God's covenant relationship with His people. And Ruth was loyal to God's law as an "alien"!

And through all this, she not only became one of the people of God, but also received a place of **security, respectability, and fulfillment**. Ruth also becomes an instrument of the kingdom to come: she is part of the lineage of **two kings- David and the King of Kings Himself, Jesus**.

We learn a lot from Naomi as well. The Naomi of chapter 1 is **an image of doubt** whereas the Naomi of 2-4 shows the transformation of a **woman now in faith**, a faith born out of a **vision of the redeemer God**.

Something that should not be missed is how tragedy befell the family. The death of Elimelech and his sons seems to be the natural result of exposure to circumstances **outside the canopy of divine promise**. They chose to leave the **Promised Land!** The point being made is that God's protection remains for those obedient to Him in the land of His appointment.

Another thing worthy of note is that the name Ruth means "**friendship**," and this book contains one of the most touching

examples of friendship in the Bible. Ruth's words to her mother-in-law are quoted often as a pledge of love and devotion. "Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God" (1:16). The writer desires to show in the person and example of Ruth that a **sincere and generous regard** for the claims of **duty and affection** leads to prosperity and honor; and at the same time that the principles and reward of righteous dealing are not dependent upon race, but are as valid for a Moabitess as for a Jew.

One last theme that cannot be overlooked is the **providence of God**. Although the book describes common people in common settings, they were **being guided** by the mysterious hand of God, who was using their uncommon faith to prepare the way for Israel's greatest king, David (4:22). You especially this from the fact that the name of God occurs **twenty-three** times in the **eighty-five** verses of Ruth. No event in the life of God's people is insignificant, because He is constantly involved!

#### **A POSSIBLE KEY WORD-**

In relationship to what we have discussed, I think the key word is: **kinsman-redeemer**, as it occurs **13** times in the book.

#### **KEY VERSE(S) AND CHAPTER(S)-**

I think that the key verse may also be one of the most popular: **Ruth 1:16**. I think you could also include **Ruth 3:11** since it speaks of Ruth's testimony. As to the key chapter, I believe it would be **Ruth 4** since in 22 verses Ruth goes from widow and poor to married and wealthy; from **anonymous to ancestress** of David and Jesus.

#### **JESUS REVEALED IN THE BOOK-**

- ✓ **Boaz is a type of Christ**
- ✓ **The entire concept of the kinsman-redeemer is a figure of Christ**
- ✓ **Ruth's friendship with Naomi is a wonderful example of Christ's friendship with sinners**

#### **THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BOOK-**

- ✓ **Naomi's guiding of Ruth in how and what to do is a type of the Holy Spirit's leading**

- ✓ The favor Ruth received was from and “promoted” by the Holy Spirit
- ✓ The Lord enabled Ruth to conceive

## **SOME TRUTHS AND APPLICATIONS-**

### **Ruth 1:16, 17**

Practice loyalty and understand what that means. A loyal person prioritizes his relationships over personal advantage or comfort. Do not back out of a commitment you make to a friend, even if it means personal sacrifice.

### **Ruth 2:8, 9**

Practice hospitality and kindness to people. Share your blessings with those even unfamiliar to you. God honors and will reward such unselfishness.

### **Ruth 2:10-12**

Maintain a Godly witness in this world. Recognize people’s Godly actions and bless them with gratitude and acts of kindness while mentioning Jesus.

### **Ruth 3:18**

Learn to wait on God!! Do not try to make your future or blessings happen. Let God work while you wait on Him in prayer as He does the work in people and circumstances, etc.

**If there is one major point to get from this book it is this: the effects of your personal relationship decisions can bless or curse this world. By remaining faithfully committed to our relationships with one another and our covenant relationship with the Lord, the Spirit can lead us to perform many acts of kindness—whereby we posture ourselves for His redemption and blessing.**

## Kinsman-Redeemer

<b>O.T. Qualification</b>	<b>Christ's Fulfillment</b>
1. Blood Relationship	Gal. 4:4, 5; Heb. 2:16; 17
2. Necessary Resources	1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19
3. Willingness to Buy	John 10:15-18; 1 John 3:16