

# Ruth

*Note Italic words are added to scripture for study and understanding.*

*The Book of Ruth is an inspiring love story which demonstrates God's providential care. The name of the author is not given, but traditionally the book is credited to Samuel. The Book of Ruth was originally part of the Book of Judges. However, by New Testament times it was included on a scroll with four other books that were read publicly at the feasts of Israel. These books were known as the Five Megilloth (scrolls) and were arranged in the following order: Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Ester. The Book of Ruth was read at the Feast of Harvest (Pentecost) because much of the story is set in the harvest fields.*

*Ruth is one of the four women named in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:5). The genealogy at the end of the book is very important because it shows that God chose Ruth, a woman from the heathen land of Moab, to be an ancestor of King David. (Key Word Bible, page 367)*

## CHAPTER 1

### *Ruth and Naomi*

<sup>1</sup>Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

*Genesis 12: 10 And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.*

<sup>2</sup>And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

*Moab (mo'ab) [probably, desirable; perhaps, seed of a father]. 1. Son of Lost by an incestuous union with his elder daughter (Gen. 19:37). 2. The descendants of Moab, Lot's son, closely related the Ammoonites (Gen. 19:37). (Davis, page 402)*

<sup>3</sup>And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons.

<sup>4</sup>And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

<sup>5</sup>And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

*During that time, it would be hard for a widow to survive on her own.*

<sup>6</sup>Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread.

*3. The country occupied by the Moabites. There was c. 1900 B.C. a thoroughgoing destruction visited upon all the great fortresses and settlements of the land, which consequence had no sedentary population until 13<sup>th</sup> century B.C.; then a new agricultural civilization appeared. (Davis, page 402)*

<sup>7</sup>Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

<sup>8</sup>And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

*She is sending her daughter in laws away.*

<sup>9</sup>The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each *of you* in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

<sup>10</sup>And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

<sup>11</sup>And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? *are there yet any more* sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

*They are sent to find themselves new husbands to care for them.*

<sup>12</sup>Turn again, my daughters, go *your way*; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, *if* I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons;

*She has given up, no hope of a husband or more sons.*

<sup>13</sup>Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

*She is saying that even if she were to have another son, they would not wait for him to grow up. To marry.*

<sup>14</sup>And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

<sup>15</sup>And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.

*Ruth refuses to leave her mother. This also tells us they had false gods (little g) to worship and may be why they had so many deaths.*

*Joshua 14: 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*

<sup>16</sup>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:

*She is accepting the Lord, wants to stay with her and the Lord.*

<sup>17</sup>Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if *ought* but death part thee and me.

<sup>18</sup>When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

<sup>19</sup>So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, *Is this Naomi?*

*Isaiah 23: 7 Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days? her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn.*

<sup>20</sup>And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

*She is recognizing her past sins and is leaving and starting a new with God, in essence repenting.*

<sup>21</sup>I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why *then* call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

*She returned to the Lord.*

<sup>22</sup>So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

## CHAPTER 2

### *Ruth Works in the Field of Boaz*

<sup>1</sup>And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name *was* Boaz.

<sup>2</sup>And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after *him* in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

*The field of Boaz was near the city of Bethlehem and was the place where Ruth gleaned corn for herself and Naomi. It is also in this area that David would tend his father's sheep, and that Joseph would bring his young wife, Mary, to deliver her baby, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is possible that in the hills above these fields the shepherds were tending to their flocks on the night when Christ was born.*

<sup>3</sup>And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging* unto Boaz, who *was* of the kindred of Elimelech.

*Hap 4745 miqreh, mik-reh'; from 7136; something met with, i.e. an accident or fortune: - something befallen, befallen, chance, event, hap (-peneth).*

<sup>4</sup>And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD *be* with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.

<sup>5</sup>Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel *is* this?

*Speaking of Ruth.*

<sup>6</sup>And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It *is* the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab:

<sup>7</sup>And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

*She asked for the leftovers of the field.*

<sup>8</sup>Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:

*Abide here fast 1692dabaq, daw-bak'; a primitive root; (properly) to impinge, i.e. cling or adhere; (figurative) to catch by pursuit: -abide fast, cleave (fast together), follow close (hard after), be joined (together), keep (fast), overtake, pursue hard, stick, take.*

<sup>9</sup>Let thine eyes *be* on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of *that* which the young men have drawn.

*He offers her protection from his workers and his water to drink when she gets thirsty. He is giving her a special offer for someone poor and asking to pick up the left overs of the field.*

<sup>10</sup>Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I *am* a stranger?

<sup>11</sup>And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and *how* thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

*He knows of her life and sacrifice for Naomi, her mother-in-law, and is moved by it.*

<sup>12</sup>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.

<sup>13</sup>Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

*She is of a different people than his other servants.*

<sup>14</sup>And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched *corn*, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

<sup>15</sup>And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not:

*He is letting her gather from the unpicked harvest, ahead of his men, and they are not to stop or bother here.*

<sup>16</sup>And let fall also *some* of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and rebuke her not.

*They are to drop some of the choice for her to gather in the field after them. Not a normal action for a farmer at harvest.*

<sup>17</sup>So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.

<sup>18</sup>And she took *it* up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

<sup>19</sup>And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day *is* Boaz.

*Wroughtest 6213 asah, aw-saw': a primitive root; to do or make, in the broadest sense and widest application (as follows): -accomplish, advance, appoint apt, be at, become, bear, ....*

<sup>20</sup>And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed *be* he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man *is* near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.

*The three requirements to be a kinsman-redeemer were: relationship, financial ability, and willingness (Lev. 25:25, 48, 49). Boaz fulfilled all three requirements, after the nearest kin was unwilling. These requirements help us understand why Christ, as our kinsman-redeemer, had to come as a man (relationship) who was also fully God (ability), and voluntarily accept the cost (Matt 26:39, 42) of redeeming His people (willingness).*

<sup>21</sup>And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.

*Stay close behind the workers to gather.*

<sup>22</sup>And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, *It is* good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.

<sup>23</sup>So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law.

### CHAPTER 3

#### *Naomi Finds a Husband for Ruth*

<sup>1</sup>Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

*She wants to help her to find rest from her labor.*

<sup>2</sup>And now *is* not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor.

<sup>3</sup>Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: *but* make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

*She wants her to clean herself and go to where the man, but to wait till he is finished eating before she approaches him.*

<sup>4</sup>And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

*When he goes to bed, lays down, she is to go and uncover his feet and lay down with him. Uncover 1540 galah, gaw-law'; a primitive root; to denude (especially in a disgraceful sense); (by implication) to exile (captives being usually stripped); (figurative) to reveal: -+ advertise, appear, bewray, bring (carry, lead, go) captive (into captivity), depart, disclose, discover, exile, be gone, open, x plainly, publish, remove, reveal, x shamelessly, shew, x surely, tell, uncover.*

<sup>5</sup>And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

<sup>6</sup>And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.

<sup>7</sup>And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

<sup>8</sup>And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

*He didn't know she was there. It would be a disgrace to sleep with a woman.*

<sup>9</sup>And he said, Who *art* thou? And she answered, I *am* Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou *art* a near kinsman.

*To spread his skirt over her is to have sex and take as a wife. Near kinsman 1350 ga' al, gaw-al; a primitive root, to redeem (according to the Oriental law of kinship), i.e. to be the next of kin (and as such to buy back a relative's property, marry his widow, etc.)*

<sup>10</sup>And he said, Blessed *be* thou of the LORD, my daughter: *for* thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.

*She hadn't pursued the younger men working in the field she followed. This may indicate that he is older in years than the young men.*

<sup>11</sup>And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou *art* a virtuous woman.

*She has kept herself virtuous while working and not seeking men for marriage.*

<sup>12</sup>And now it is true that I *am thy* near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.

<sup>13</sup>Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, *that* if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, *as* the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.

*She is asked to stay the night and if no next of kin comes to claim her or to protest than he shall take her.*

<sup>14</sup>And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

*They got up early so she could leave unnoticed.*

<sup>15</sup>Also he said, Bring the vail that *thou hast* upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six *measures* of barley, and laid *it* on her: and she went into the city.

<sup>16</sup>And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who *art* thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

<sup>17</sup>And she said, These six *measures* of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law.

<sup>18</sup>Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

*She is told to be patient and let him come to her and not rush to him.*

## CHAPTER 4

### ***Boaz Marries Ruth***

*Boaz was willing to perform the duty of next of kin to redeem a piece of land so it could stay in the family (see Lev. 25:25), but there was a man who was a closer relative. However, the plans of the closer relative were complicated by the need." Therefore, the other relative deferred to Boaz, who willingly married Ruth. The legal basis for this practice is found in Deuteronomy 25: 5-10, but the obligation dates back to the patriarchs (Gen. 38:8). The legal ramifications of such cases were still being discussed in Jesus' day (Matt. 22: 23-28).*



*It is to be noted that Ruth did not shame the relative who refused to perform his duty According to Deuteronomy, she was supposed to take off his sandal and spit in his face, yet it appears that she was not even present with Boaz at the time. Some have suggested that Ruth was not able to do so because she was a Moabitess. Others say that because of her love for Boaz, Ruth did not want to marry the person who was the closest relative. (Key Word Bible, page 371)*

<sup>1</sup>Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down.

<sup>2</sup>And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.

<sup>3</sup>And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which *was* our brother Elimelech's:

<sup>4</sup>And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy *it* before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem *it*, redeem *it*: but if thou wilt not redeem *it*, *then* tell me, that I may know: for *there is* none to redeem *it* beside thee; and I *am* after thee. And he said, I will redeem *it*.

*Leviticus 25: 25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.*

<sup>5</sup>Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy *it* also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

*Deuteronomy 25:*

*5 If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.*

*6 And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.*

<sup>6</sup>And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem *it* for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem *it*.

*Mar 7843 shachath shaw-khath'; a primitive root; to decay, i.e. (causative) ruin (literal or figurative): -batter, cast off, corrupt (-er, thing), destroy (-er, -ucation), lose, mar, perish, spill, spoiler, x utterly, waste, (-r).*

<sup>7</sup>Now this *was the manner* in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave *it* to his neighbour: and this *was* a testimony in Israel.

*Deuteronomy 25:*

*7 And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.*

*8 Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her;*

*9 Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house.*

<sup>8</sup>Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy *it* for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

<sup>9</sup>And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye *are* witnesses this day, that I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's, and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

<sup>10</sup>Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye *are* witnesses this day.

*Deuteronomy 25: 6 And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.*

<sup>11</sup>And all the people that *were* in the gate, and the elders, said, *We are* witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem:

*The witnesses make it a legal process and at the gate is where judgements are heard in the city or community.*

<sup>12</sup>And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.

### ***The Genealogy of Boaz***

<sup>13</sup>So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

<sup>14</sup>And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed *be* the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

<sup>15</sup>And he shall be unto thee a restorer of *thy* life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

<sup>16</sup>And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.

<sup>17</sup>And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

*Boaz was a descendant of Salmon who married Rahab the harlot of Jericho (Josh. 21: 1-21; Matt. 1:5). Since the purpose of Hebrew genealogies was to show lineage rather than to list each particular descendant, it is possible that some generations are missing in both Ruth 4:18-22 or Matthew 1: 4-6. Assuming that the generations from Ruth to David are complete, Ruth and Baz were King David's great-grandparents.*

<sup>18</sup>Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron,

<sup>19</sup>And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,

<sup>20</sup>And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon,

<sup>21</sup>And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,

<sup>22</sup>And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

## References

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