

The Book of Ruth

Introduction and Background Information

The book of Ruth provides a glimpse into the ordinary lives of the people in the turbulent period of the Judges in the latter part of the twelfth century B.C. Events set forth in this narrative contrast with the dark background of strife and bloodshed during this period.

The story of Ruth is a beautiful interlude of love. It records the life of Ruth, a Moabite widow, who leaves her homeland to live with her widowed mother-in-law Naomi in Bethlehem. God honors Ruth's trusting spirit by guiding her to the field of Naomi's near-kinsman Boaz. By His grace and faithfulness God provides Ruth not only with grain to sustain life but also with a place in the Messianic lineage of the Lord Jesus.

The theme of Ruth is redemption, especially as it relates to the Kinsman-Redeemer. It reveals God's character of grace and sovereign care of those who wholly depend upon Him.

Verses	1:1-18	1:19-2:23	3:1-8	4:1-22
Structure of Ruth	Ruth's Decision	Ruth's Devotion	Request for Redemption	Reward for Redemption
Focus	Love Demonstrated		Love Rewarded	
Places	Moab	A field in Bethlehem	A threshing floor	The city of Bethlehem
Topics	Ruth and Naomi		Ruth and Boaz	

Ruth Lesson 1

Ruth 1:1-5

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. A man and his family left Bethlehem in Judah to live for a while in the country of Moab.

Read Ruth Chapter 1

1A. List all the characters in vs. 1-5 as the story of Ruth opens. What information does the text give us about these characters?

1B. The bulk of Ruth takes place “in the days when the judges governed.” What is happening to the Israelites at this time? What is the sin cycle? Judges 2:16-19, 3:5-6, 21:25

2A. Where and whose was “the land” referred to in Ruth 1:1? Genesis 12:1-7, 13:14-18

2B. Was famine common there? How do you think famine relates to the sin cycle of the time of the Judges? Genesis 12:10, 26:1, 41:41-57, Ezekiel 5:11-17

3 Elimelech made a choice to go to Moab. In your opinion, was this a good choice or a bad choice? Do you think he planned to stay there permanently? Reread Genesis 26:1-6. Did anyone else ever make a similar decision? Why

4. Who were the Moabites and where did they originate? Genesis 19:30-37

5A. Why do you think the two sons married Moabite women? What does scripture say about this? Deuteronomy 7:1-3, 23:3, Joshua 23:12-13, Ezra 9:12

5B. What does the New Testament say about believers marrying or living with non-believers? Why is it important in a marriage to have the same God, the Same Bible, the same Savior and the same way to heaven? 1 Corinthians 7:12-16, 2 Corinthians 6:14-15

6. How does Ruth 1:5b describe Naomi's circumstances? Can you relate to her loss and the feelings she must have had? SHARE.

7. Luke 15:13 talks about the prodigal son. Most of us are familiar with the parable. These first 5 verses in Ruth describe for us the journey of a prodigal family and some of the consequences. Have you ever taken a prodigal journey (a trip without God)? What was the outcome, and how did it affect your life? Please SHARE if comfortable.

8. What attributes of God are displayed when He disciplines us? Proverbs 3:11-12, Jeremiah 30:11, Hebrews 12:5-10