

Ruth



Welcome to Ruth

“For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.” **Ruth 1:16**

Welcome to the book of Ruth! We are so glad you are here! Ruth is one of the shortest, yet most memorable books of the Bible. These four chapters capture the story of Ruth the Moabite, her mother-in-law Naomi, and Boaz, a family relative. Theirs is a story of loss and joy, friendship and faith, kindness and redemption. Whether the book of Ruth is new or familiar to you, we pray for fresh eyes to see God's sovereignty and steadfast love in this story and in your own story.

Blessings as you study God's Word,

Diana Douglass, Elizabeth Greene, and Amy DiDio

This study was adapted from a Ruth Bible study written by *Aina Carruth*. Aina writes curriculum and teaches women's Bible study at her home church in Plano, Texas. Thank you, Aina, for sharing your content and helping us create this Bible study!

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The photo on the front cover of the study is the creative work of *Bekah Lindner*. Thank you, Bekah, for such a beautiful picture!

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Bible Study Method

This Bible study may look a little different than others you have done. Instead of looking at a particular topic, we will be spending seven weeks in one book of the Bible. Studying the book of Ruth from beginning to end will allow the topics in the chapters to introduce themselves. First, we need to gather background information so we can study the book of Ruth in its proper context. We will need to answer some essential questions...Who wrote this? To whom was it written? When was it written? Why?

Once context has been established, we will be better positioned to enter into the study of Scripture. The study guide has been written to be just that: a guide through the book of Ruth. As you work through each week, you will gain first-hand knowledge of the text, meaning you will be learning for yourself. While this may sound a little intimidating, it really isn't. The series of marking the text and answering questions are not written to be difficult, but to take you through three important stages of learning : comprehension, interpretation, and application.

Comprehension : What does the text say?

This stage of learning involves reading repetitively to gain familiarity with the text and looking for detail. For this study, the comprehension piece is labeled "mark the text" in your study guide. In order to know what the text says, we must first see the text, and observation skills will help us do just that. We take notice of main characters. We look for any words or phrases that are repeated. We use a dictionary to look up definitions of words we may not fully understand. We take notice of transition words and see how they connect the text. You will be asked to draw out some observations in the "answer" section. Be sure to write out any questions that arise as you make observations because it is ok to have questions as you study.

Interpretation : What does the text mean?

The interpretation stage of learning involves implying things from the text beyond what it says to answer the question, "what does it mean?" In this "answer" section of this study, a variety of questions will guide you in interpreting the text. Feel free to look up other cross references as you study. We ask that you do your best to answer the questions before looking at study notes in your Bible. The goal is to use your own mind in this process.

Application : How should this change me?

While we are now looking at how to apply the text to ourselves, application questions are drawn from a God-centered perspective. We ask questions like - What does this teach me about God? Is there an example to follow? Is there a sin to avoid? Is there a promise to claim? You will find questions like this in the "apply" section of this study guide.

Old Testament Context

Genesis	Adam & Eve - Creation and Fall Abraham - Isaac - Jacob Israel is set apart to make God known among the nations A famine leads Jacob's family to Egypt
Exodus	Israelites in slavery in Egypt for 400 years God sends 10 plagues on the Egyptians Moses delivers them from slavery Mt. Sinai - 10 Commandments & Tabernacle
Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	The Law given and explained God teaches His people how to worship in the tabernacle The Israelites' unbelief led to their wandering in the desert for 40 years Instruction for future generations and entering the promise land
Joshua	Joshua leads Israel into the promise land of Canaan
Judges	The Israelites don't wipe out all of the inhabitants as commanded Israelites co-inhabit the land and foreign nations influence them The beginning of a downward spiral into sin and evil God delivered His people through the leadership of judges
<i>Ruth</i>	Named for one of the main characters, Ruth, meaning "friend." Other main characters include Naomi, her mother-in-law, and Boaz. This book takes place during the dark and difficult time of the judges. Elimelech moves his family from Bethlehem to Moab, where his two sons marry Moabite women, Ruth being one of them. When Elimelech and his sons die, Naomi and Ruth return to Bethlehem. Their desperate conditions lead Ruth to glean in a field. She happens upon the field of Boaz, a relative of Elimelech. After a midnight encounter between Ruth and Boaz at the threshing floor, Boaz acts as a kinsmen-redeemer and marries Ruth. Their family line brings forth kings, and ultimately, Jesus.
1&2 Samuel	Israel asks for a king so they can be like the other nations First two kings - David and Saul

<p>1&2 Kings 1&2 Chronicles</p>	<p>A record of the kings following Saul and David Downward spiral continues (Solomon - Rehoboam - Jeroboam) Nation splits in two : Judah and Israel Exile (Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian)</p>
<p>Ezra Nehemiah Esther</p>	<p>Historical books Remnant of Israel returns to their homeland after Exile</p>
<p>Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi</p>	<p>Prophetic books - written by the prophets who lived in the time of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles</p>

Ruth - Week 1

1. Where does the book of Ruth fit in the story of Scripture?

2. Who wrote the book of Ruth?

3. When was it written?

4. To whom was it written?

5. In what style was it written?

6. What are the central themes of the letter?

Teaching Notes

Read Ruth 1:1-5 below.

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

1 In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. **2** The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. **3** But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. **4** These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, **5** and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

Mark the text

Color green - Naomi, mother-in-law, Mara

Color pink - Ruth (the Moabite), daughter-in-law

Circle the travel words in this passage : sojourn, dwell, went, left, remained

Double underline places : Bethlehem in Judah, Moab

Put a box around the cause/transition words - so, but, for

Define

sojourn

Answer the following questions.

1. What clue does **Ruth 1:1** give about when the events in the book of Ruth take place?
2. Read **Judges 2:6-23**. What is the state of the nation of Israel?
3. A man named Elimelech is introduced in **Ruth 1:2**. Draw his family tree based on **Ruth 1:3-4**. Underline the Israelites in green and the Moabites in pink.
4. Where is Elimelech and his family from? Highlight the city on your map in the back of the study.
5. Where is his family traveling to? Underline the country on your map and the path that would have been taken in red. (**Ruth 1:1-2**)
6. What prompted their travel?
7. There is a deep history between Israel and Moab. Read the following passages and describe the relationship between these two nations.

- *Genesis 19:30-38* (The beginning of the Moab nation.)
- *Number 22:1-6* (The Nation of Israel traveling to the Promised Land after being led out of Egypt by Moses.)
- *Judges 3:12-30*

8. Based on what you know so far, do you think it was wise for Elimelech to leave Bethlehem and go to Moab? Explain your response.

9. What tragedy occurs in *Ruth 1:3*?

10. Read *Deuteronomy 7:1-4*. Is it surprising that Israelites would intermarry with Moabite women? Why or why not?

11. How long did the family of Elimelech remain in Moab? Circle this in the text. What does staying in Moab this long indicate?

12. Tragedy strikes again in the family of Naomi. What grave loss occurs? (*Ruth 1:3-5*)

13. Sketch a timeline of the events in *Ruth 1:1-5* below.

APPLY : Describe a time when it felt as though you lost everything. Did God feel near or far from you in your sorrow? What can we learn from times of pain? What truths of Scripture and attributes of God comfort you when you feel as though "all is lost"?

Read James 1:2-4 and Romans 8:28. How can these passages bring hope and comfort during the trials of life?

Close this week's lesson in prayer. Ask God to fill you with the Spirit so you can stand firm when pressures from society come against you. Pray for strength to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord. If you are currently in a time of pain and sorrow, bring these feelings to the Lord and ask Him to comfort you. Consider sharing this with a friend who can pray for you, too.

Teaching Notes

Ruth - Week 3

Last week we were introduced to Naomi and her family. We learned that Ruth and Orpah married her sons and became her daughters-in-law. We also learned of calamity that struck Naomi, and then other great losses that impacted all three women. This week we will see what lays ahead for Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah. Reread *Ruth 1:1-5* and then dig into *Ruth 1:6-22* below.

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. **7** So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. **8** But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. **9** The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. **10** And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." **11** But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? **12** Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, **13** would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me." **14** Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

15 And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." **16** But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. **17** Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you." **18** And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

19 So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, "Is this Naomi?" **20** She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. **21** I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?" **22** So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

Mark the text

Color green - Naomi, mother-in-law, Mara
Color pink - Ruth (the Moabite), daughter-in-law
Color yellow - Lord, Almighty
Color purple - kindly/kindness
Color orange - rest

Double underline the places - Moab, Bethlehem
Circle the travel words - arose, set out, return(ing), went, go, turn back, gone back, leave/leaving
Put an X over - bitter(ly), wept, die, death, empty, calamity
Put a box around the cause/transition words - so, but, for

Shift your focus to Ruth 1:6-14.

1. What event(s) prompt Naomi's return to Bethlehem in Judah? Describe the difference in her life since she left the first time. How do these details shape the story as a whole?

2. Turn to the map in the appendix. Draw the journey back to Bethlehem in blue.

3. Paraphrase the dialogue in *Ruth 1:6-14*.

4. Describe what you notice about Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah.

- Naomi:

- Ruth:

- Orpah:

5. In *Ruth 1:8-13*, Naomi pleads with her daughters-in-law to stay in Moab. Why does she ask this of them? What is her motivation?

6. Naomi proclaims a blessing over her daughters-in-law, "May the Lord deal kindly with you" in *1:8*. Look up *Ruth 1:8* in the NIV to gain more insight. Rewrite this verse in your own words.

7. Naomi proclaims another blessing, “The Lord grand that you may find rest,” in *Ruth 1:9*. What do you think she means by “rest” in *1:9*?

8. To whom does Naomi attribute her current circumstances in *1:13*? Why might she think this?

9. What is the response of Orpah and Ruth in *1:14*? What is the difference in these actions? What role does faith play in Ruth’s decision?

APPLY: Describe a time in which you saw unswerving devotion demonstrated. What was memorable about the loyalty of this person(s)? What was their motivation in showing sacrificial love?

Shift your focus to Ruth 1:15-18.

10. Read **Ruth 1:15**. Who/what does Naomi tell Ruth to return to?

11. How would returning to Moab have been a natural decision?

12. Who decided to return to Moab? Was this the right decision? Why or why not?

13. In **1:15-18**, Ruth declares legendary loyalty to Naomi. List everything she pledges.

14. What evidence do you see of Ruth's belief in the God of Israel?

Think about it: In a time in which everyone did what was "right in their own eyes" (Judges 17:6, 21:25), the choices of Ruth are set apart. How did her love for her mother-in-law go against the spirit of the times?

Read Judges 2:11-19. How does Ruth's spiritual journey contrast that of the nation of Israel?

15. What caused Naomi to relent and let Ruth accompany her to Judah? (**Ruth 1:18**)

APPLY: Ruth's loyalty to Naomi involved selflessness. Is it easier for you to selflessly serve a family member or a friend? Why?

How can you imitate love and sacrifice for a friend or family member? How does loving sacrificially point us to our Jesus?

What evidence is there that Naomi taught her daughters-in-law about the God of Israel? Who in your life has and/or can teach you about the Lord?

Shift your focus to Ruth 1:19-22

16. Why do you think the town is stirred at the return of Naomi? (*Ruth 1:19*)

17. Naomi, means “my joy,” “my bliss,” and “pleasant.” In *Ruth 1:20*, what name does Naomi give herself? Why?

18. To whom does Naomi attribute her current circumstances? (*Ruth 1: 20-21*)

19. What 3 things does Naomi list in *1:21* that the Lord has done?

20. Compare and contrast Naomi’s sentiments to those of Job in *Job 1:20-22*.

APPLY: Who/What are you likely to attribute blame to when life is bitter?

Like Naomi, we may attribute our bitter circumstances to God. Is this a correct line of thinking? Why or Why not? Explain your answer.

*How can we have hope regardless of our circumstances? Read Psalm 61:2, John 16:33, 1 John 5:4.
How do these verses encourage you?*

Wrap Up

Reread **Ruth 1** in one sitting.

Write a theme for this chapter in six words or less.

Close by praying and thanking God for being the anchor in life's changing circumstances. Ask the Lord if there is a friend or family member that needs to be loved sacrificially by you. Ask that the Lord would give you a supernatural ability to love others. Write down the name of this person(s) in your journal and think about a way to love them and serve them this week. If you're feeling bold, tell someone who can pray for you and keep you accountable to loving as Christ would.

Teaching Notes

Ruth - Week 4

Last week we saw Ruth's profession of faith and its outworking in her through her unwavering loyalty to Naomi. We were reminded that God's saving work reaches beyond cultural and ethnic barriers. After a 10 year sojourn in Moab, Naomi and Ruth have returned to Bethlehem. This week we will see God's sovereign hand directing the fate of these widows as they seek to begin a new life. This week we will focus on *Ruth 2*. Read all of *Ruth 2* in one sitting.

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

1 Now Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. **2** And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." **3** So she set out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech. **4** And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem. And he said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you!" And they answered, "The LORD bless you." **5** Then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?" **6** And the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, "She is the young Moabite woman, who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. **7** She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the reapers.' So she came, and she has continued from early morning until now, except for a short rest."

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. **9** Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping, and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn." **10** Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" **11** But Boaz answered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law

since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. **12** The LORD repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!" **13** Then she said, "I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, though I am not one of your servants."

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

14 And at mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here and eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed to her roasted grain. And she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. **15** When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. **16** And also pull out some from the bundles for her and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her."

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

17 So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. **18** And she took it up and went into the city. Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also brought out and gave her what food she had left over after being satisfied. **19** And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz." **20** And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Naomi also said to her, "The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers." **21** And Ruth the Moabite said, "Besides, he said to me, 'You shall keep close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'" **22** And Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, lest in another field you be assaulted." **23** So she kept close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

Mark the text

Color green - Naomi, mother-in-law

Color pink - Ruth (the Moabite), my daughter, Moabite, daughter-in-law, foreigner

Color blue - Boaz, my lord

Color yellow - Lord, God of Israel

Color purple - kindly/kindness

Color orange - rest

Color red - relative/close relative, redeem/redeemer

Double underline the places - Moab, Bethlehem

Circle - glean/gleaned/gleaning

favor - star next to the word

Put a box around the cause/transition words - so, but, for

Define

glean

redeem/redeemer

favor

Shift your focus to Ruth 2:1-7.

1. **Ruth 1:22b** signifies a specific time of year that sets the stage for the rest of the narrative. What was it?

2. Whose field did Ruth happen to glean from? List everything you learn about this man in **2:1-7**. What is your initial impression of him?

3. Look up the following verses. Note how they add to your understanding of God's provision for the marginalized. What do these provisions teach us about the character of God?

- **Leviticus 19:9-10**

- **Leviticus 23:22**

- **Deuteronomy 24:19-22**

4. Describe the relationship between Boaz and his workers in **Ruth 2:4**.

5. What do we learn about the work ethic of Ruth in **2:7** and **17-18**?

6. Look up the following verses to add to your understanding of *work*.

- **Genesis 2:15**

- *Proverbs 10:5*

- *Colossians 3:23-24*

APPLY: Work can have a negative connotation in our culture, but throughout Scripture it is what we do to honor God. Reflect on your attitude toward the work that God has given you to do. How can you serve Him joyfully in the everyday tasks He's given you? In your vocation?

APPLY: One of the ways Ruth demonstrates her loyalty to Naomi is by her hard work. What do you think motivates her loyalty? When have you had to choose to be loyal to someone even when it was costly? How did that experience teach you about Christ's loyal provision for you?

Shift your focus to Ruth 2:8-16.

7. List everything Boaz does to provide security for Ruth in **2:5-16**.

8. Based on **Ruth 2:8-9** and **22-23**, what possible risks or danger did Ruth face?

9. What is Ruth's response to the kindness of Boaz in **2:10**? Why do you think she responds this way? Read **Deuteronomy 23:3-5** to add to your insight.

10. What has Boaz been told about Ruth? How has her reputation preceded her? (**Ruth 2:11**)

11. Ruth speaks of the "favor" she has found with Boaz. Read **Ruth 2:12** and note Ruth's relationship with the Lord. How would this lead Boaz to find "favor" with Ruth?

APPLY: In 2:12 Boaz spoke kindly to Ruth when he said, "The Lord repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!" Read John 10:10 and 1 Peter 1:3-9. How do you have a full reward because of your relationship with Christ?

Read Psalm 57:1. This is a prayer David wrote when he fled from Saul. How have you come to take refuge under His wings?

Shift your focus to Ruth 2:14-16

12. What kindness does Boaz extend Ruth in **2:14**?

13. What does **2:14b** communicate about the provision given to Ruth?

14. How does Boaz go above and beyond what was required of him by the Law of Moses? (**Ruth 2:15-16**) Looking back at your answer to question three may help with this answer. Why do you think he does this? How is this a picture of our inheritance in Christ?

APPLY: Describe a time when someone went above and beyond to provide for you and bless you. How did you feel? Was it easy to receive? Why or why not?

Shift your focus to Ruth 2:17-23

15. Ruth continues to demonstrate a strong work ethic. List her actions in *Ruth 2:17-23* that support this fact.

16. What did Ruth bring back to Naomi? What was Naomi's response? (*Ruth 2:19*)

17. What providential fact does Naomi learn in *2:19b*?

18. What important news does Naomi share with Ruth in *2:20*?

19. Look up *Ruth 2:20* in the NIV. How does this add to your understanding of a redeemer?

APPLY: How does the kindness and provision of Boaz in chapter 2 point us to Christ's kindness on behalf of sinners? Cite Scripture that communicates this truth.

Wrap Up

Reread **Ruth 2** in one sitting.

Write a theme for this chapter in six words or less.

Close in prayer by thanking God for His Word. Thank God for his beautiful examples of costly service and kindness as demonstrated by both Ruth and Boaz. Pray that he would strengthen you to serve those around you sacrificially. Think of one person you can love sacrificially this week and write their name down in your journal. Pray about how you might serve them this week in action and in truth.

Teaching Notes

Ruth - Week 5

Last week we saw Ruth's devotion as she rose to action to provide for Naomi. God's hand graciously led her to the fields of Boaz, a prominent man, and kinsman redeemer for the family of Naomi. He treated Ruth with compassionate kindness by offering her protection and provision. This week we see Naomi guide Ruth into action in the hope of redeeming both of their futures. Read all of **Ruth 3** in one sitting.

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

1 Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you? **2** Is not Boaz our relative, with whose young women you were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. **3** Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. **4** But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he will tell you what to do." **5** And she replied, "All that you say I will do."

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had commanded her. **7** And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. **8** At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! **9** He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer." **10** And he said, "May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. **11** And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. **12** And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. **13** Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the LORD lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning."

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

14 So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." **15** And he said, "Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city. **16** And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you fare, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her, **17** saying, "These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, 'You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'" **18** She replied, "Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today."

Mark the text

Color green - Naomi, mother-in-law
Color pink - Ruth, your servant, my daughter
Color blue - Boaz
Color yellow - Lord
Color purple - kindly/kindness
Color orange - rest
Color red - relative, redeem/redeemer

Put a box around the cause/transition words - so, but, for

Shift your focus to Ruth 3:1-5.

1. **Ruth 3:1-4** begins with a plan devised by Naomi. List everything that Naomi asks her to do. (Reading **Ruth 3:3** in the NIV may help with your understanding of “anoint”.) Do you find these instructions surprising coming from her mother-in-law? Explain your answer.

2. Read **Deuteronomy 25:5-10**. How does this add to your understanding of the ancient custom Naomi had in mind?

3. What is Naomi seeking on behalf of Ruth? (**Ruth 3:1**) Look up this verse in the NIV to add to your understanding of this passage.

4. Where is this plan to take place? (**Ruth 3:2**)

5. What do you think was the purpose of waiting until Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was lying down? (**Ruth 3:3-4**)

6. This narrative takes place in a patriarchal society. What potential consequences could have happened if this plan had failed? How aware do you think Ruth was of the potential for a worst case scenario?

7. Describe Ruth's response to Naomi's plan in **3:5-6**. What does it reveal about her character? Do you think Ruth would have been wrong to oppose this plan?

APPLY: Describe a time when you took a risk to help someone you loved. How did you feel in deciding to take a risk? What was your motivation? What was the outcome?

Shift your focus to Ruth 3:6-13.

8. How well does Ruth follow Naomi's instructions in **3:6-7**?

9. What gives Ruth an advantage as she approaches Boaz in **3:6-8**?

10. How do you feel about what she was asked to do?

11. What metaphor does Ruth use to make her request in **3:9**? How does this compare to the metaphor Boaz uses in **Ruth 2:12**? Search for other places in the Bible that use the same metaphor, such as **Psalms 91:1-4**.

12. Paraphrase the response of Boaz in the threshing room in **Ruth 3:10-11**. How do you think Ruth felt upon hearing these words?

13. Boaz describes Ruth as a worthy or virtuous woman. Read **Proverbs 31:10-31** and list any similarities between Ruth and the woman described in the passage.

14. *Ruth 3:12* introduces an obstacle to Naomi's plan. What is it?

15. Describe how Boaz demonstrates integrity in his encounter with Ruth in *3:10-13*.

APPLY: The sovereign hand of God continues to guide the story of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz from behind the scenes. Describe how you have experienced God's gracious guidance in the unfolding of events in your life. How does your past experience help you to trust the future to Him?

Shift your focus to Ruth 3:14-18.

16. In **3:14** Boaz says, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." What was his motivation in saying this?

17. Ruth does not return to Naomi empty handed. What does she bring back with her? Who is it from?

18. **Ruth 3:14-18** leaves us at a cliffhanger in this redemptive story, yet the redeemer has made his intentions clear. How has Boaz done this?

APPLY: How do you endure when there are "obstacles" to your plan? What strengthens you in the waiting?

Wrap Up

Reread Ruth 3 in one sitting.

Write a theme for this chapter in six words or less.

Close in prayer by thanking God for His sovereign hand in our lives and for being our constant when there are “obstacles” to “our plan.” Thank Him that even in the unknowns of our lives, He is reigning and ruling over the details. Take time to confess an area of your life where you have struggled in trusting God. Confess your limitations and proclaim God’s ability to fully deliver what is best in every area of your life.

Teaching Notes

Ruth - Week 6

Last week we saw Ruth take a bold risk under the instructions of Naomi: She presented herself to Boaz to ask for marriage at the threshing floor. Boaz blessed Ruth and accepted her proposal for redemption as we saw God's plan unfold further. We were left with a cliffhanger as we learned that there was a nearer redeemer than Boaz who would be given an opportunity to redeem Ruth first. This week we will see the fullness of God's gracious plan continue to take shape as Boaz honors both tradition and Ruth. Read *Ruth 4:1-12* below.

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

1 Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. **2** And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. **3** Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. **4** So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it." **5** Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance." **6** Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. **8** So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. **9** Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. **10** Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day." **11** Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, **12** and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman."

Mark the text

Color green - Naomi, mother-in-law

Color pink - Ruth (the Moabite), daughter-in-law

Color blue - Boaz

Color yellow - Lord

Color red - relative/close relative, redeem/redeemer/redemption/redeeming, buy/bought, acquire

Double underline the places - Moab, Ephrathah, Bethlehem

Put a box around the cause/transition words - so, but, in order to, because of

Shift your focus to Ruth 4:1-6.

1. With whom is Boaz speaking in **4:1-6**? How does Boaz refer to him in **verse 1**?
2. Where does the dialogue take place? Why do you think Boaz requested the elders be present?
(*Ruth 4:2*)
3. Paraphrase the conversation in your own words.
4. Read **Leviticus 25:23-31, 47-55**. These verses describe the rules of redemption for a kinsman redeemer according to the law. How do these verses clarify your understanding of this chapter?
5. How does the “nearer kinsman redeemer” respond to Boaz in **4:4b**?
6. How was Boaz clever in the way he presented the proposal to the “nearer kinsmen redeemer”?
(*Ruth 4:3,5*)
7. What was the response of the “nearer kinsman redeemer” in **4:6**? What is the result for Boaz? What is the result for Ruth and Naomi?

APPLY: Boaz was eager to do all that was required by Mosaic law during a time when “everyone did what was right in their own eyes” (Judges 17:6, 21:25). How is he an example to us in the times in which we live?

Shift your focus to Ruth 4:7-12.

8. What victory is accomplished in **Ruth 4:7-8**?

9. List all the implications of this transaction in **4:9-10**.

10. In **4:11-12**, the people speak a blessing over the house of Boaz. What specific hopes does their blessing express?

11. Read the story of Leah and Rachel in **Genesis 29:16-30:24**. Why would Ruth be compared to these women in the blessing spoken over the house of Boaz?

APPLY: Boaz assumes responsibility for Ruth's redemption. Read Romans 3:23-24. Who assumes responsibility for your redemption?

How do the following verses add to your knowledge of redemption? Galatians 4:4-5, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 9:11-12.

Wrap Up

Reread Ruth 4:1-12.

Write a theme for this section in six words or less.

Close in prayer today thanking God for the redemption you have in Christ Jesus. Thank God for redemption that brings you from death to life. Thank the Lord for a redemption that brings forgiveness, hope, and peace. Thank God for a redemption that is eternal. Spend some time praying for a family member or friend that needs to believe in the redeeming work of Christ.

Teaching Notes

Ruth - Week 7

Last week we saw Boaz appear at the city gate before the elders and the “nearer kinsman redeemer.” When the “nearer kinsman redeemer” decided not to act as redeemer, Boaz stepped in. He publicly declared to buy all that belonged to Naomi’s husband and her sons, including Ruth, whom he said would become his wife. The elders spoke a prayer of fruitfulness and fame. This week concludes our study of Ruth. These final verses continue to point to God’s kindness, sovereignty, and ultimate plan for redemption in Christ. Read *Ruth 4:1-12* and then read *Ruth 4:13-22* below.

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. **14** Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! **15** He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.” **16** Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. **17** And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Title this section in 3-4 words : _____

18 Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron, **19** Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, **20** Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, **21** Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, **22** Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

Mark the text

Color green - Naomi, mother-in-law
Color pink - Ruth (the Moabite), daughter-in-law
Color blue - Boaz
Color yellow - Lord
Color red - redeemer

Double underline the places - Moab, Bethlehem
Circle the cause/transition words - so, but, for

Shift your focus to Ruth 4:13-17.

1. How does Ruth's life change according to **4:13-17**?
2. Look back at **Ruth 2:12** and **Ruth 3:10**. How do the blessings of **4:13** correspond to these verses?
3. Carefully read **Ruth 4:14-15**. Who is the "redeemer" the women are referring to? Along with "redeemer," what else would he be for Naomi?
4. In **4:17**, Ruth is compared to seven sons. What is the significance of this in light of the story?
5. Compare Naomi's state in **1:19-21** with her state in **4:13-16**. What do you find? How does Naomi's life change for the better?

APPLY: Reflect on your own life. How has God brought sweetness out of a bitter season? What did you learn about God? What did you learn about yourself?

Shift your focus to Ruth 4:18-22.

6. The book of Ruth closes with a genealogy. Why do you think the author chose to include this?

7. Make a family tree using *Ruth 1:2-4* and *Ruth 4:19-22*.

8. Read *Matthew 1:1-17*. List the people from the book of Ruth mentioned in this text. What significant connection does this genealogy make between the story of Ruth and the story of salvation?

9. Note the significance of the mothers mentioned in *Matthew 1:5*. Ethnically speaking, what do they have in common? What does this reveal about the true children of God? Read *Galatians 3:28-29* to help with your answer.

10. Read *2 Samuel 7:1-17*. How does the story of Ruth relate to the covenant that God made with David?

11. How does the book of Ruth compare to the dark period of the Judges? What purpose(s) do you think the book serves in the grand meta-narrative of the Bible?

12. How is Boaz an example of Christ? How are they similar redeemers? How is Jesus a truer, better redeemer than Boaz? Read *Philippians 2:1-11* to help you with your answer.

APPLY: The story of Ruth is a story of redemption. Think about your own personal story of redemption. Compare your life today to how it was before you trusted in Christ to redeem you from the curse of sin. Describe how your redemption has brought you hope in the present and hope for the future.

Wrap Up

Reread Ruth 1-4 in one sitting.

What characteristic of God have you seen most clearly in this study? How can this knowledge of God bring transformation in your life? How does this challenge you to change the way you think, speak, and/or live?

Close in prayer. Take time to thank God for His beautiful example of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz in the story of redemption. Marvel at His sovereignty throughout the generations. Wonder at the amazing sacrifice of Jesus, His plan from the beginning of time to redeem mankind from sin. Ask God how you can be used to continue to unfold His plan of redemption as a woman, in a time in which many do what seems right to them.

Teaching Notes

Map of Ancient Israel

