

# Bible Studies

## The Book of Ruth



# *Ruth*

*Capturing the Seed*

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## Introduction to Ruth

### *Authorship, Date and Purpose*

**Authorship and Date:** We can determine who the author of Ruth is and the approximate time of its writing by examining key verses in Ruth.

1. Ruth was authored after the time of the Judges (Ruth 1:1; 4:7; Jgs 17:6)
2. The genealogy ends with David and does not mention Solomon at the end of chapter 4. So Ruth must have been authored before Solomon's birth.
3. While David is the last one mentioned in the genealogy at the end of chapter 4, he is not mentioned as being a king. So Ruth must have been written with prophetic authority between the times of David's birth, during the rule of King Saul, and before he became king.
4. The author of Ruth must have already known the importance of David to have written his genealogy.
5. The author must be the prophet Samuel, who had anointed David as king c. 1070 BC (1 Sam 16:13), but had passed away c. 1060 BC before David ascended the throne.
6. Samuel knew that Saul was a king chosen by men and rejected by God (1 Sam 13:13-14); whereas David was the king selected by God.

**Purpose:** Samuel probably wrote the book of Ruth as a wonderfully inspired and inerrant piece of historical propaganda to pave the way of kingship for David!

- Out of the darkness of the book of Judges, the book of Ruth blossoms and shows God's supernatural sovereignty, providence, and redemptive plan for Jew and gentile alike.
- The promised king would come through the line of Judah and not through King Saul's tribe of Benjamin.
- A virtuous Gentile woman would put her personal trust and hope in the Messianic God of Israel and be blessed in capturing the seed that allowed the exaltation of the line of Judah to the throne of David and allowed the establishment of David's throne forever more in our Messiah, Jesus Christ.

### **Psalm 132:11 - Psalm of Ascent (chs. 120-134: Sung while ascending Jerusalem 3x/yr)**

LORD, remember David

and all his self-denial.

<sup>2</sup> He swore an oath to the LORD,  
he made a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:

<sup>3</sup> "I will not enter my house  
or go to my bed,

<sup>4</sup> I will allow no sleep to my eyes  
or slumber to my eyelids,

<sup>5</sup> till I find a place for the LORD,  
a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob."

<sup>6</sup> We heard it in Ephrathah,  
we came upon it in the fields of Jaar:

<sup>7</sup> "Let us go to his dwelling place,  
let us worship at his footstool, saying,

<sup>8</sup> 'Arise, LORD, and come to your resting place,  
you and the ark of your might.

- <sup>9</sup> May your priests be clothed with your righteousness;  
 may your faithful people sing for joy.”
- <sup>10</sup> For the sake of your servant David,  
 do not reject your anointed one.
- <sup>11</sup> The LORD swore an oath to David,  
 a sure oath he will not revoke:  
“One of your own descendants  
I will place on your throne.
- <sup>12</sup> If your sons keep my covenant  
 and the statutes I teach them,  
 then their sons will sit  
 on your throne for ever and ever.”
- <sup>13</sup> For the LORD has chosen Zion,  
he has desired it for his dwelling, saying,
- <sup>14</sup> “This is my resting place for ever and ever;  
here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it.
- <sup>15</sup> I will bless her with abundant provisions;  
 her poor I will satisfy with food.
- <sup>16</sup> I will clothe her priests with salvation,  
 and her faithful people will ever sing for joy.
- <sup>17</sup> “Here I will make a horn grow for David  
 and set up a lamp for my anointed one.
- <sup>18</sup> I will clothe his enemies with shame,  
 but his head will be adorned with a radiant crown.”

### ***Facts about the Book of Ruth***

- Understanding Ruth requires some understanding of ancient Israel’s customs and laws.
- The book of Ruth is primarily a narrative giving an historical account along with a genealogy.
- The Law of the kinsman redeemer, which prophetically foreshadows Christ as our Redeemer, is perfectly portrayed by Boaz serving both Naomi and Ruth.
- An understanding of a kinsman-redeemer is essential to an understanding of Rev 5
- The Law of gleaning is a part of alms-giving which is one of the 3 pillars of Judaism
- Originally, the 22 books of the Tanakh (Heb OT) had the Book of Ruth as a part of Judges. This is why Ruth follows the book of Judges in the OT today.
- Ruth has now been categorized as its own book in the current 24 books of the Tanakh. It follows the book of Proverbs since Prov 31’s virtuous woman seems to describe Ruth.
- Ruth is one of the five books of the Megillot, which are read on various Feast days:
  - The Song of Songs: Sabbath of Passover (Mar/Apr)
  - **Book of Ruth: Shavuot – Feast of Weeks/Pentecost (May/Jun) (May 23-25)**

**WHY?**

  - Ruth presents the birth of David, and David’s death is commemorated on Shavuot
  - Shavuot recalls the giving of the Torah written on stone... leading to 3000 people put to death that very day

- Pentecost recalls the giving of the HS and the law written on our heart (Jer 31:33)... leading to 3000 redeemed finding life that very day
- Celebrates the wheat harvest given to Joshua's generation and that now benefits Ruth and Naomi
- Celebrates the Gentile acceptance of YHWH.
- Whereas Passover required unleavened bread, Shavuot required leavened bread (Lev 23:17). Both the "unleavened" Jew and the "leavened" Gentile become one by faith in the Messiah.

### **Eph 2:11-22**

<sup>11</sup> Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;  
<sup>12</sup> That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

<sup>14</sup> For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

<sup>15</sup> Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

<sup>16</sup> And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;

<sup>17</sup> And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

<sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

<sup>19</sup> Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

<sup>20</sup> And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

<sup>21</sup> In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

<sup>22</sup> In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

- Book of Lamentations: 9<sup>th</sup> of Av (July/Aug)
- Ecclesiastes: Sabbath of Sukkot (Sept/Oct)
- Book of Esther: Purim (Feb/Mar)
- The genealogy given in chapter 4 is the 1<sup>st</sup> to reveal the actual family and town that would bring forth the Messiah...as will be seen!

### ***The Setting of Ruth***

- Ruth takes place during the "dark ages" of Israel during the time of the Judges about 125 years before David was born.
  - This would have been during the period of Gideon.
  - This dark period of the Judges began with the next generation after Joshua died.

### **Judges 2:7-13**

<sup>7</sup> And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel.

<sup>8</sup> And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.

<sup>9</sup> And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathheres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

<sup>10</sup> And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

<sup>11</sup> And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

<sup>12</sup> And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

<sup>13</sup> And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth

- The time of the judges was a time of anarchy in Israel (Jgs 17:6). God would raise up a judge to judge Israel, then after they repented the judge would be used to deliver Israel. Then Israel would forsake God again.
- The famine mentioned in the land of Israel in Ruth 1:1 was one of the judgments from God that Israel experienced during this time for not keeping the Law

### **Deut 28:9-12, 15, 23-24**

<sup>9</sup> The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.

<sup>10</sup> And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.

<sup>11</sup> And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

<sup>12</sup> The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

<sup>15</sup> But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

<sup>23</sup> And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.

<sup>24</sup> The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

- Out of this setting comes one of the most beautiful love stories ever told. Through hardships, faithfulness and perseverance leads to redemption of a widow and a regaining of a land.
- A woman from a Gentile people of no account captures the seed of David and to the Messiah Himself!

## **Ruth 1**

**Everything that happens in the book of Ruth is out of the providence of the Almighty (El Shaddai)**

**1** 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 Bethlehem-Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

- Bethlehem = “House of bread” because it was very well watered and fertile
- The famine had stricken even the most fertile parts of Israel
- Elimelech was of importance in Judah (ch 2-3) and was not poor (Ruth 1:21)
- Elimelech right in taking his family to Moab?

<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 (Kilyone), Ephrathites of Bethlehem-Judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

- Elimelech = El = “God”; Melech = “King” → “My God is King”
- Naomi = “The lovely gracious one”
- Mahlon = ?? – 1<sup>st</sup> husband of Ruth (Ruth 4:10)
- Chilion = ?? – Husband of Orpah
- Ephrathites (Ephrath is the ancient city of Bethlehem): Used here to denote they were the native dwellers of Bethlehem, from the tribe of Judah...not just dwellers there.
- Bethlehem-Judah: Distinguishes it from another place called Bethlehem-Zebulun (from the tribe of Ephraim).
- Samuel was being sure to show the link between David with the tribe of Judah in Bethlehem (1 Sam 17:12).
- Micah also announced Him who would succeed David’s throne as coming from Bethlehem Ephrathah (Mic 5:1).

<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.

- Orpah = “Gazelle”
- Ruth = “Lady friend” or “beautiful”

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

<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.

<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.

<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?

- The Levirate law, concerning a kinsman, was used throughout the Levant, not just in Israel and Moab

<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;

<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.

<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.

<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:

<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.

- What a pivotal moment in this story!
- By faith, Ruth, a Moabite, was all in and placing her fate with the people of the Lord in a foreign land.
- Ruth's story has similarities with that of Abraham leaving his land to follow God.

### **Matt 15:22-28**

<sup>22</sup> And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

<sup>23</sup> But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. <sup>24</sup> But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>25</sup> Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. <sup>26</sup> But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. <sup>27</sup> And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.



<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?

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

- Naomi = “The lovely gracious one”
- Mara = “Bitter” (Ex 15:23)

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

- LORD = YHWH is in the role of the witness
- Testified = To give witness against another in a court of Law. (Ex 20:16; 2Sam 1:16; Isa 3:9)
- Almighty = The role of Judge who brought destruction on Naomi.
- Naomi’s lament parallel’s the lament of Job
- No where do we see a joyful acknowledgment of Ruth’s faith in YHWH!
  - Instead, Naomi is centered on her own problems. Naomi’s faith is lacking, although she does have a mind for God.
  - Sometimes we think we are so focused on the apostle Paul’s prescription for persevering and pressing on for the prize, that we end up relying on our own actions instead of God’s – how can we tell if we are or not?
  - Perseverance attended by stress and misery
  - Perseverance attended by joy, singing hymns, and praise to God
  - Which one do we really pray for?
- Almighty (El Shaddai) = ??
  - The naming of a person in an ancient epic defined that person’s character in the scheme of the story being told. How does this name relate to the story of Ruth?
  - Used 48x in the OT
  - Pentateuch: Related to “protection and deliverance” of the patriarchal covenant lineage and the land
  - Job: Parallels the same relationship with “protection and deliverance”
  - Prophets: Associated with “destruction” to those that would harm the God’s covenant people and the land
  - Psalms: Related to protection of the Davidic King or member of the covenant community
- El Shaddai → The one who resolves all hardships and obstacles in order to keep His covenant promises.
  - El Shaddai overcame all of the obstacles of Famine, childlessness, loss of land, and loss of faith in Naomi...
  - And overcame these through Ruth’s faith and a kinsman redeemer to keep his covenant promises through her seed forever more!

<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.

## Ruth 2

2 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

- “Kinsman”:
  - It is true that Boaz was within the same family line of Elimelech, but the word used for kinsman here is that of a distant relationship...only an acquaintance. Someone who would not have been seen as a saving hope for Naomi.
  - In relation to Naomi this kinsman would have seem distant and far removed from her. She would have more related to the usage of this word by the Psalmist in

### Psalms 88:8, 18

<sup>8</sup> Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination unto them: I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.

<sup>9</sup> Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.

<sup>18</sup> Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.

Notice the poetic parallel use of this word as “lover and friend” being far from him.

### Psalm 31:10-12

<sup>10</sup> For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.

<sup>11</sup> I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.

<sup>12</sup> I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.

- “A mighty man of wealth”
  - This same phrase was applied to Gideon:
 

**Judges 6:12**  
And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.
  - It also applied to Jephthah:
 

**Judges 11:1**  
Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour, and he was the son of an harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah.
  - It is historically held that he had distinguished himself in conflicts against the Moabites and was a strong man in times of peace as well. This word was not just used of physical might but always included moral character before God as well.
  - Boaz was morally brave in the Book of Ruth:
    - As a landlord
    - As a confessor of God
    - As a man of action
- “Boaz” = Strength. Solomon named one of the two pillars to the temple after his grandfather (1 Kgs 7:21; 2 chron 3:17)

- Though poor and dejected, Naomi was allied with a powerful and godly man...she just didn't know the extent of that yet!!! The action in the story is rising!

<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.

- “Gleaning” was the welfare system of the day

### **Deut 24:19-22**

<sup>19</sup> When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands.

<sup>20</sup> When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

<sup>21</sup> When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

<sup>22</sup> And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

- Ruth and Naomi are now feeling the poverty and lack of food.
- Ruth is wanting to go out in this foreign land to take care of her and her mother-in-law. She knew the difficulties of doing this, being a Moabite woman. Yet her faith was strong that she would be shown grace!

<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” = God-incidence. Coincidence is not kosher among Jewish beliefs

<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?

<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.

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

<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.

- Ruth found the grace she was seeking! Strong Boaz granted it to her. Alone in this foreign land she found assurance in his strength...and in the help of Boaz strong young men as well.

<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 shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

- Hebrew play on words: Ruth says why have you noticed the unnoticed and granted me grace?

<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.

<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.

- Boaz was seeing her from God's perspective. He noticed her faith in God and her actions for others.
- A strong faithful man of God and a strong faithful woman of God! They just have to get together!

<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.

<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.

- The Hebrew, *tsabat*, means that Boaz personally served her with his own hands

<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:

<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.

<sup>17</sup> So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah (or 9 gallons) 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 today is Boaz.

<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.

- “near of kin” (Heb: *goel*): Boaz is now connected with the concept of the kinsman-redeemer

<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.

<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.

- Barley harvest was around the time of Passover: This harvest began with the feast of 1<sup>st</sup> fruits and ended with the Feast of Weeks.
- Wheat harvest was around the time of Shavuot (Pentecost): 50 days after Passover

### Ruth 3

**3** 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?

- “Rest for thee” - What is meant by “rest”?
- Also used in Ruth 1:9 when Naomi is talking to her 2 daughter-in-laws
  - Rest is referring to having the blessings of God, in this case, a home and all that entails
    - A husband to protect her and lead by serving her
      - Without a husband, a woman’s life was helpless and defenseless...just like a people without a God, or a church without a Christ.
      - It was in this helpless condition that Ruth decided against rest in Moab and came to Naomi, her people and her God.
      - It was in this condition that Ruth took the initiative to go claim her right as an Israelite widow to glean in the fields to help Naomi.
    - An heir to carry on her name in Israel and also to care for her in old age
    - Land to live on and grow food
  - What brought about this beautiful revolution? The love of Ruth which sought not her own, and the faithfulness of Naomi which deserved such love.

- Unlike when Naomi tried to give her daughter-in-laws rest in Moab, now she is seeking rest for Ruth as an Israelite.
- Ruth would eventually provide an offspring that would give eternal rest. He is our Sabbath rest even now.

### Psalm 132:11

<sup>11</sup> The LORD swore an oath to David,  
a sure oath he will not revoke:

“One of your own descendants  
I will place on your throne.

<sup>12</sup> If your sons keep my covenant  
and the statutes I teach them,  
then their sons will sit  
on your throne for ever and ever.”

<sup>13</sup> For the LORD has chosen Zion,  
he has desired it for his dwelling, saying,

<sup>14</sup> “This is my resting place for ever and ever;  
here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it.

<sup>15</sup> I will bless her with abundant provisions;  
her poor I will satisfy with food.

<sup>16</sup> I will clothe her priests with salvation,  
and her faithful people will ever sing for joy.

<sup>17</sup> “Here I will make a horn grow for David  
and set up a lamp for my anointed one.

<sup>18</sup> I will clothe his enemies with shame,  
but his head will be adorned with a radiant crown.”

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

<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.

<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.

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

- Ruth left to claim her right as an Israelite widow to glean in the fields.
  - She would have been wearing widows clothes and was at the mercy of how others wanted to treat her. Her hunger was at stake.
- Now, she is leaving to claim her right as an Israelite widow for marriage
  - She was now dressed up and looking her best; yet this time her heart was at the mercy of another. Her honor is at stake.
- Yet EL SHADDAI had ordered her goings in both occasions.

<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.

<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.

- Ruth was asking Boaz to marry her!
- According to the social philosophy of the Mosaic law no member of the national organism of Israel was to perish:
  - No family branch of the tree was to wither
  - Whatever had been dislocated by natural events was to be re-set
  - Whatever had been alienated would be redeemed
- This applied to land as well as people
- The duty rested on families. No one outside of being a blood relative could perform the duties of a Kinsman redeemer
- The redeemer is also called the “Avenger”

Lev 25:25-31; 47-55  
Deut 25:5-10;  
Deut 19:1-13

<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.

- Ruth could have had any man she wanted!

<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.

<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.

<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.

<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.



## Ruth 4

4 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.

- Before Ruth made it home, Boaz was probably already at the gate waiting for the nearer kinsman to enter the city.
- “Ho! Such a one!” This man remained anonymous either because the name was forgotten at the time of the writing or to prevent shame on that family name.
- Performing this act at the gate was a form of judicial summons for an ancient legal procedure.

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

- “Ten men” – While there were 10 elders to officially act as witnesses, there was a throng of people who gathered around this event as shown in vs. 4 and 9.

<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:

- “Selleth” – resolved to sell
- “Parcel of land” – field

Lev 25:25 - If thy brother become impoverished and sell his possession, let his nearest blood-relative come to him, and redeem that which his brother sold

- Elimelech's name was still on the property, so the law demanded redemption.
- It is on this basis that Boaz begins his negotiation in the interest of Naomi
- The fact that Boaz knew that Naomi was planning to sell the land shows that Boaz and Naomi already had communication before Ruth had visited Boaz at the threshing floor

<sup>4</sup> And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and (even) 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.

- “I thought...” – Boaz does not let on to this man that he is after Ruth, but approaches him about the redeeming of the land 1<sup>st</sup>.
- “Inhabitants” – Those sitting

<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.

- Ruth was also an heiress to the land since she came and is allowed all the rights as an Israelite under the law. So the redeemer must marry Ruth as well as his levirate duty. What if Ruth had stayed home?

<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.

- Some think it is injurious because the land wouldn't really belong to him. But what kind of father would have an issue of his own son assuming the land eventually?
- Nor could he openly admit that reason before a seated assembly with so many witnesses
- It is believed that Boaz strategically refers to Ruth as the "Moabitess".
- Elimelech's misfortunes have been ascribed to moving his family into Moab and allowing his sons to intermarry with them in defiance of the law.
- He does not want to endanger his family and possessions by marrying Ruth
- He sees only the letter of the law and not the love that animates it!
- He fears but love has no fear
- When he looks at Ruth, he sees Moab instead of a godly woman taking shelter under God's wings.
- He is not a man of action here. Because he does not see Ruth from God's perspective.

<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.

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

- Now Boaz closes the deal!!!

<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.

<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:

<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.

- Boaz was a descendent of Pharez (Gen 38)
- Ruth's rights had been neglected just as Tamar's was
- Boaz is now receiving a wife for God and obedience to his laws!

<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.

- No longer can Naomi refer to herself as “mara”!

<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.

- Naomi had been marginalized, but a Moabitess from outside the law transcended the law with love for Naomi.

“Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother” (Matt. 12:50)

- Ruth’s love for Naomi takes the place of physical descent

<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.

<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.

- We see that the name of the nearer kinsman is forgotten and Boaz is lifted up as a hero!
- In Deut. 23:3, it is said: “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of Jehovah; even to their tenth generation they shall not enter.” This was supposed to have been fulfilled in Ruth.
- In the genealogy of the Gospel according to Matthew, Boaz, through whom Ruth was received into the congregation of Jehovah, is the tenth from Abraham.
- In Deut 23:2 relates to Judah and Tamar – David is the tenth generation from Pharez.