

## # 10 - BIBLE OVERVIEW

# *the book of* Ruth

We just finished the Book of Judges, which was a time when the Israelites worshipped idols and married nonbelievers. Because they were disobedient God punished them by allowing them to be conquered by other nations. They would cry out to God and God sent a judge to rescue them. The book following Judges is called Ruth. It is a story about a courageous woman who lived during the time when the judges led Israel.

We begin in the city where Jesus would be born years later - Bethlehem. There was a famine (poor crops and not enough food) and a man named Elimelech moved his family to Moab in hopes of finding food. The people of Moab didn't worship the God of Abraham. Their religious beliefs allowed them to sacrifice children. The Israelites and Moabites did not like one another.



**It was about 50 miles from Bethlehem to Moab.  
A long trip by foot.**

Elimelech's wife was Naomi and they had two sons. Both sons married a Moabite woman, which tells us that the family was not living by the laws God had given the Israelites. Life was hard and Elimelech and both sons died. This left Naomi and her two daughters-in-law (Ruth and Orpah) widows. It was hard for a woman to survive in OT times without a husband or father to look out for them.

Travelers tell Naomi that crops are better in Israel, so she decides to return to Bethlehem. Naomi told her daughters-in-law to stay with their families and not worry about her. Orpah was sad to part with Naomi, but she kissed her goodbye and returned to her family. However, Ruth insisted that Naomi's people would be her people and Naomi's God would be her God. So the two women make the trip to Bethlehem.



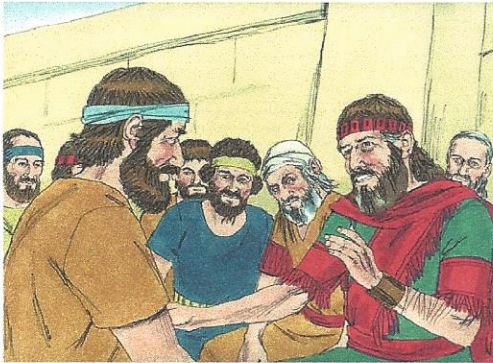
**Ruth stayed with Naomi and Orpah returned to her childhood home.**

Finding food was still a problem and Ruth goes out and gleans (picking up stalks of grain that were dropped during the harvest) stalks of grain in the fields of prosperous farmers. God leads her to Boaz's field. Boaz likes Ruth and finds out more about her. He makes sure she gets plenty of food from his fields and tells his other workers to be nice to Ruth. It turns out Boaz is related to Ruth's deceased husband.



**Ruth gleaning in the fields.**

Boaz offers to buy Naomi's property and is willing to marry Ruth and take care of the women. However, in OT times the closest relative had first dibs on buying land, so Boaz goes to the man who is a closer relative and asks him if he wants the land. He did, but not enough to also marry Ruth. He told Boaz he would relinquish his rights and Boaz could have the property.



**Boaz seals the deal at the town gate.**

Ruth and Boaz marry. This makes Boaz, Ruth's kinsman-redeemer (a man who follows God's laws in the OT and helps a relative in need or in trouble). They have a son named Obed. When Obed grows up he has a son named Jesse, who is the father of David!



**Ruth with her son Obed.**

So Ruth is an ancestor of King David and since David is an ancestor of Jesus, Ruth is too. She is one of four women mentioned in Jesus' genealogy in Matthew. (Matthew 1:5) So you can see that God uses all kinds of people - even a woman like Ruth who started out as a pagan and a hated Moabite.

There is a lot of symbolism in the Book of Ruth.

1. Christians are like Ruth. We were not born into the family of Abraham (God's chosen) but God still offers us salvation. Just like Boaz offered to rescue Ruth from poverty.
2. Boaz sought Ruth out, just like Jesus seeks us to be His.
3. Boaz saw that Ruth's needs were met. He took care of her even though she was a foreigner (from another country). Just like Jesus accepts us, even though we are sinners.
4. Boaz purchased the right to marry Ruth, just as Jesus Christ purchased us with His blood when He died on the cross.

### DEVOTION

*"Be kind and compassionate to one another" (Ephesians 4:32a NIV).*

How was Naomi kind and compassionate? (See Ruth 1:8-9; & 3:1)

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How was Ruth kind and compassionate? (See Ruth 1:16-17; & 2:2, 10-12)

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How was Boaz kind and compassionate? (See Ruth 2: 8-9; 4: 9-10)

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## PRAYER

God, help me to be kind and compassionate when someone needs help. Don't let me turn my back on a person in need. Amen.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I am

\_\_\_\_\_ years old. I am walking through the Bible with

\_\_\_\_\_ on this date \_\_\_\_\_ .

## FOR A TODDLER

What you need: Nothing extra today.

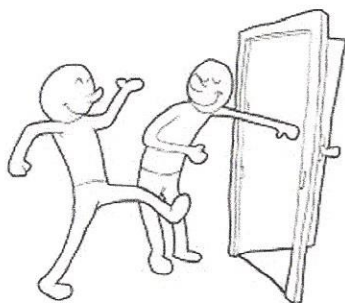
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"Let us do good to all people" (Galatians 10:b NIV).

There was a woman named Ruth in the Bible. She had to move to a new place. She didn't know the people there. She wondered if the people would be mean or nice to her. She hoped they would be nice!

There was one man who was very kind to Ruth. He made sure she had food and protected her from anybody that was mean to her. His name was Boaz, and God was pleased with Boaz. God rewarded Boaz and Ruth. They married and had a family.

How are the people in the pictures below showing kindness?



**PRAYER**

Dear God, When there is someone new at church or school, help me to be nice to them, so they are not scared or sad. Amen.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I am

\_\_\_\_\_ years old. I am walking through the Bible with

\_\_\_\_\_ on this date \_\_\_\_\_ .