OLD TESTAMENT · HISTORY · BOOK 8 OF 66

Ruth

Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God (1:16)

4	Samuel	c. 1150–1100 B.C.	Kinsman
Chapters, 85 Verses	Author	Days of the Judges	The Redeemer

STRUCTURE

The Book in Four Parts

Each chapter is one scene: a **road** (1), a **field** (2), a **threshing floor** (3) and a **city gate** (4). Naomi moves from empty to full.



Each bar shows that part's share of the 85 verses.

I · 1 · 22 verses

Ruth Stays

Famine, death in Moab, Ruth's choice, and the return.

II · 2 · 23 verses

Ruth Gleans

In the field of Boaz, who shows her kindness.

III · 3 · 18 verses

Ruth Asks

At the threshing floor: "thou art a near kinsman."

IV · 4 · 22 verses

Boaz Redeems

At the gate; Obed is born; the line of David.

WHO'S WHO

The People of the Story

Names in Hebrew carried meaning, and in Ruth they fit the story.

1:2

Elimelech

"My God is King." Naomi's husband; dies in Moab.

1:2, 20

Naomi

"Pleasant." Comes home calling herself Mara, "bitter."

1:2; 4:10

Mahlon and Chilion

Naomi's sons; Mahlon was Ruth's husband.

1:4, 14

Orpah

Kisses Naomi and goes back to her people and gods.

1:16

Ruth

The Moabitess who clave to Naomi and to Naomi's God.

2:1

Boaz

"A mighty man of wealth," kinsman of Elimelech.

3:12; 4:1–8

The Nearer Kinsman

Willing to buy the land, but not to marry Ruth.

4:17

Obed

"Servant." Son of Ruth and Boaz; grandfather of David.

MATTHEW 1:5

Rachab

Rahab of Jericho, mother of Boaz.

From Moab to Bethlehem

MAP

From Moab to Bethlehem

Elimelech’s family went to Moab, across the Jordan and the Dead Sea, and Naomi and Ruth came back the same way. The numbers match the cards below.

RUTH 1–4

From Moab to Bethlehem

Naomi goes out full and comes home with Ruth

In the days when the judges ruled



To Moab
Elimelech, Naomi and their sons (1:1–2)

Back to Bethlehem
Naomi and Ruth (1:6–22)

“So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem.”

RUTH 1:19 (KJV)

The book does not name the road; the usual way went round the north end of the Dead Sea by Jericho and the fords of Jordan. Positions approximate.

BibleStudyForAll.com · Map positions approximate · Scripture from the King James Version

1 1:1–2

Beth-lehem-judah

In a famine, Elimelech takes Naomi and their two sons to sojourn in Moab.

2 1:2–5

The Country of Moab

About ten years: Elimelech dies, the sons marry Orpah and Ruth, and the sons die.

3 1:7–18

On the Way Back

Orpah kisses Naomi and returns; Ruth cleaves to her: “whither thou goest, I will go.”

4 2:3; 4:13

Bethlehem Again

Ruth gleans in the field of Boaz at the barley harvest; Boaz redeems and marries her.

RUTH AT A GLANCE · PART 3 OF 4

Ruth's Choice, the Kinsman Redeemer and God's Providence

RUTH 1:16–17

Ruth's Great Choice

Orpah went back to "her people, and unto her gods" (1:15). Ruth chose the LORD.

RUTH 1:16

Whither Thou Goest

"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."

1:16

Her Road

"Whither thou goest, I will go"

1:16

Her Home

"Where thou lodgest, I will lodge"

1:16

Her People

"Thy people shall be my people"

1:16–17

Her God

"Thy God my God," sworn by the LORD

RUTH 2–4

The Kinsman Redeemer

God's law gave a near relative, the kinsman (Hebrew *go'el*), the right and duty to redeem.

1 LEVITICUS 25:25

Redeem the Land

Buy back a poor brother's field so it stays in the family.

2 DEUTERONOMY 25:5

Raise Up a Name

Marry the widow so the dead man's name is not cut off.

3 4:4–6

Able and Willing

The nearer kinsman was able but not willing; Boaz was both.

> *"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."*
>
> Ruth 4:9 (KJV)

THE HIDDEN HAND

God's Quiet Providence

There are no miracles in Ruth, yet God is at work in every scene.

1:6

Bread Again

"The LORD had visited His people in giving them bread."

2:3

Her Hap

"Her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz."

2:12

Under His Wings

Ruth came to trust under the wings of the LORD God of Israel.

4:13

A Son

"The LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son."

NAOMI EMPTY	NAOMI FULL
"I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty" 1:21	"There is a son born to Naomi" 4:17
NAOMI EMPTY	NAOMI FULL
"Call me Mara": bitter 1:20	"A restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age" 4:15

RUTH AT A GLANCE · PART 4 OF 4

The Line of David, Christ Our Redeemer and Key Themes

RUTH 4:18–22

The Line of David

The book ends with ten generations, from Pharez the son of Judah to David the king.

1. **Pharez**
2. **Hezron**
3. **Ram**
4. **Amminadab**
5. **Nahshon**
6. **Salmon**
7. **Boaz**
8. **Obed**
9. **Jesse**
10. **David**

> *"And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David."*
>
> Ruth 4:21–22 (KJV)

Ruth, a Moabitess, became the great-grandmother of King David. See **King David** for his life.

LOOKING FORWARD

Christ, Our Kinsman Redeemer

Boaz is a picture of the Lord Jesus, who became our near Kinsman and paid the price to redeem us.

HEBREWS 2:14

Our Kinsman

He took part of flesh and blood, becoming our near Relative.

1 PETER 1:18–19

The Price Paid

Redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish."

MATTHEW 1:5–6, 16

The Same Line

From Boaz and Ruth, through David, to "Jesus, who is called Christ."

EPHESIANS 2:12–13

Strangers Brought Near

Like Ruth, Gentiles once far off are "made nigh by the blood of Christ."

BIG IDEAS

Key Themes

Loyal Love

Ruth's kindness to Naomi; Boaz's kindness to Ruth.

1:16; 2:11; 3:10

Redemption

The kinsman buys back land and raises up a name.

4:4–10

God's Providence

The LORD guides ordinary events for His purpose.

1:6; 2:3; 4:13

Faith of a Gentile

A Moabitess trusts under the wings of Israel's God.

1:16; 2:12

From Empty to Full

Naomi's bitterness turned to joy.

1:21; 4:14–17

Godly Character

Boaz the kind master; Ruth the virtuous woman.

2:4; 3:11

Kindness to the Poor

Gleaning laws lived out in the fields.

2:2, 15–16

Faithfulness in Dark Days

Godliness in Bethlehem while Israel strayed.

1:1

The Way to David

God preparing Israel's king, and Christ.

4:17–22

KEY VERSE

> *"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."*
>
> **Ruth 1:16 (KJV)**