

The Book of Ruth

Author: Possibly Samuel

Date of story: During the days of the judges; possibly the time of Gideon

Occasion: A family migrated during a severe drought in Israel

Place in the Canon: Second in the five scrolls; part of the Writings

Purpose:

- to portray the brighter side of the days of the judge
- to provide an example of gentiles in Israel
- to portray some of the role of a near kinsman
- to fill in the genealogy of David

Persons:

Elimelech—אֵלִימֶלֶךְ—*'eliyemek*—my God is king

Naomi—נְעֻמִי—*na'omiy*--pleasant

Mahlon—מַחֲלֹן—*mahlon*—sickly

Chilon—כִּילֹן—*chilyon*—pining

Ruth—רוּת—*ruth*—unknown

Orpah—עֲרַפָּה—*'orpah*—unknown

Boaz—בֹּעַז—*bo'az*—in him is strength

Anonymous kinsman—פְּלוֹמִי אֶלְמוֹנִי—*pelomiy 'almoniy*—so and so

Outline

An Israeli Family Sought Gentile Shelter from the Lord's Chastening Hand (1:1-22)

I. A Search for Gentile Refuge Ended in Tragedy (1:1-5)

- A. There was a famine in the land of Israel (1:1)
- B. An Israeli man took his wife and two sons to sojourn in Moab (1:1-2)
- C. While in Moab the man died (1:3)
- D. The two sons married Moabite women (1:4)
- E. After ten years the two sons died (1:5)

II. The Widowed Mother Returned with a Loving Daughter-in-law (1:6-18)

- A. After the famine the wife, Naomi, decided to return to Israel (1:6)
- B. The daughters-in-law started to go with her (1:7)
- C. Naomi urged the daughters-in-law to return to their mothers (1:8-13)
- D. One daughter-in-law, Orpah, returned to her land and her god (1:14)
- E. The other, Ruth, refused to leave her mother-in-law (1:15-18)

III. The Embittered Widow Was Welcomed Home (1:19-22)

- A. The women arrived in Bethlehem at the start of the barley harvest (April) (1:19, 22)
- B. The women of Bethlehem were happy to see them (1:19)
- C. Naomi changed her name to Marah (bitter) (1:20-21)

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Ruth Met Her Kinsman Redeemer (Ruth 2)

Key Verse: Then she left, 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 family of Elimelech. (Ruth 2:3)

Introduction: After returning to Bethlehem from a devastating sojourn in Moab, Naomi and Ruth found themselves in poverty. They were reduced to gleaning in grain fields for sustenance, being unaware of Divine Providence working behind the scenes.

I. Ruth Providentially Gleaned in the Field of Boaz (2:1-7)

- A. Ruth had a kinsman redeemer named Boaz (2:1)
- B. Ruth asked Naomi for permission to glean for grain (2:2)
- C. Ruth began gleaning by chance in Boaz's field (2:3)
- D. Boaz went to the field where Ruth was gleaning (2:4)
- E. Boaz asked about Ruth's identity (2:5)
- F. The field foreman told him she was Naomi's Moabite daughter-in-law (2:6-7)

II. Boaz Gave Ruth Protection and Permission to Glean Freely (2:8-16)

- A. Boaz told Ruth to glean only in his fields with his servants (2:8-9)
- B. Ruth expressed thankfulness and appreciation (2:10)
- C. Boaz acknowledged her worthiness of his kindness (2:11-12)
- D. Ruth again expressed her thankfulness (2:13)
- E. Boaz asked Ruth to eat lunch with him (2:14)
- F. Ruth ate her fill and saved some back for Naomi (2:14)
- G. Boaz commanded the reapers to let her glean freely (2:15)
- H. Boaz commanded the reapers to leave some grain for her intentionally (2:16)

III. Ruth Learned That Boaz Was a Kinsman Redeemer (2:17-23)

- A. At day's end Ruth went home with an ephah of barley (2:17)
- B. Ruth gave Naomi what she had saved back for her (2:18)
- C. Naomi asked where she had gleaned that day (2:19)
- D. Ruth identified her benefactor as Boaz (2:19)
- E. Naomi reported that Boaz was a near-kinsman (2:20)
- F. Naomi commanded Ruth to glean only in the fields of Boaz (2:21-22)
- G. Ruth gleaned there throughout the barley and wheat harvests (2:23)

Conclusion: Often when circumstances seem to be going against us, the providential hand of God is working behind the scenes for His glory and our good.

James D. Price

Ruth Sought Redemption from Boaz (Ruth 3)

Key Verse: And he said, "Who *are* you?" So she answered, "I *am* Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative." (Ruth 3:9)

Introduction: At the end of the barley harvest, Naomi advised Ruth that it was time for her to seek security for herself and the family inheritance. This could best be done through near kinsman Boaz by means of levirate marriage and property redemption. So Naomi advised Ruth to discretely ask Boaz to fulfill his duty as a kinsman-redeemer.

I. Naomi Advised Ruth to Seek Redemption from Boaz (3:1-5)

- A. Naomi offered to help find security for Ruth (3:1)
- B. Naomi identified Boaz as Ruth's kinsman-redeemer (3:2)
- C. Boaz was to spend the night at the threshing floor (3:2)
- D. Ruth should dress her best for the encounter (3:3)
- E. Ruth should go secretly to the threshing floor (3:3)
- F. Ruth should lie down at Boaz' feet after he is asleep (3:4)
- G. Boaz will tell Ruth what to do (3:4)
- H. Ruth agreed to do so (3:5)

II. Ruth Followed Naomi's Advice (3:6-7)

- A. Ruth went to the threshing floor as instructed (3:6)
- B. After a satisfying meal, Boaz went to sleep at the end of the threshing floor (3:7)
- C. Ruth came quietly to where Boaz slept (3:7)
- D. Ruth uncovered his feet and lay down there (3:7)

III. Boaz Agreed to Secure Redemption for Ruth (3:8-13)

- A. At midnight Boaz awoke, startled by her presence at his feet (3:8)
- B. Boaz asked who she was (3:9)
- C. Ruth identified herself as Ruth the Moabitess (3:9)
- D. Ruth asked Boaz to be her kinsman-redeemer (3:9)
- E. Boaz blessed her for her wise kindness (3:10)
- F. Boaz agreed to do so if the nearer kinsman refused (3:11-13)

IV. Ruth Brought Home a Gift and Good News (3:14-18)

- A. Ruth lay unseen at his feet until morning (3:14)
- B. Boaz gave Ruth six measures of barley (3:15)
- C. They each returned to the city (3:15)
- D. Ruth reported the happenings to Naomi (3:16-17)
- E. Naomi told Ruth to wait patiently for Boaz to settle the matter (3:18)

Conclusion: By His death on the cross, Christ our Kinsman-Redeemer secured our sonship with God and our heavenly heritage. We need, as it were, to lie at his feet and eagerly wait for our redemption (Rom. 8:23)

Ruth Married Boaz Her Kinsman Redeemer (Ruth 4)

Key Verse: So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. (Ruth 4:13)

Introduction: Ruth, a young Moabite widow of an Israelite, thus had the right of property redemption and levirate marriage through a near kinsman of her husband. Boaz was second in line to fulfill the duty of a kinsman redeemer; so he legally acquired that right for himself. Thus, through Ruth, he became an ancestor of King David and Jesus Christ.

I. Boaz Established His Legal Right of Redemption (4:1-6)

- A. Boaz met Elimelech's near kinsman at the city gate (4:1)
- B. Boaz assembled a quorum of city elders as witnesses (4:2)
- C. Boaz informed the kinsman he should redeem Naomi's property (4:3-4)
- D. The kinsman agreed to redeem the property (4:4)
- E. Boaz informed the kinsman he should also take Ruth as a levirate wife (4:5)
- F. The kinsman turned over the duty of a kinsman redeemer to Boaz (4:6)

II. Boaz Legally Redeemed Ruth and Naomi's Property (4:7-12)

- A. The Kinsman confirmed his decision by removing his shoe (4:7-8)
- B. Boaz publicly ratified his redemption of the property and Ruth (4:9-10)
- C. The witnesses corroborated the redemptive transaction (4:11)
- D. The people blessed the impending marriage of Boaz and Ruth (4:11-12)

III. Ruth Became the Great Grandmother of King David (4:13-22)

- A. Boaz married Ruth (4:13)
- B. Ruth bore a son to Boaz (4:13)
- C. The women of Bethlehem blessed Naomi because of her grandson (4:14-15)
- D. Naomi became the grandson's nurse (4:16)
- E. The neighbor women named the son Obed (4:17)
- F. Obed was the grandfather of King David (4:17)
- G. The genealogy of David is recorded back to Perez (4:18-22)

Conclusion: Although a gentile, Ruth's persistent faith and trust in the God of Israel resulted in a life blessed beyond measure. Although gentile aliens, we too become part of God's family and heirs of a heavenly heritage through faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.