

# Ruth

## Introduction:

1. The context of the book of Ruth is the book of Judges.
2. Approximately 1282 – 1271 BC – during the reigns of Ehud and Deborah as judges.
3. In the midst of the wickedness of the period of the judges, the story of Ruth shines as a light in the darkness.

## I. Ruth in Moab (Ruth 1:1-18)

### A. The Famine (1:1)

1. The period of the judges was a time of spiritual famine.
2. Often, God would punish His people even with physical famine.
  - a. Bethlehem means, “*house of bread*.”
  - b. In due time, it would be the house of the Bread of Life.

### B. The Family (1:1-5)

1. Elimelech and Naomi had two sons, Mahlon and Chilion.
2. Because of the famine, they traveled to the land of Moab.
  - a. One must always consider the consequences of leaving God’s house for a far country.
  - b. Even though only for a sojourn, there could be dire results.
3. In Moab, Elimelech died. Mahlon married Ruth and Chilion married Orpah – women of Moab.
  - a. See Exodus 34:11-16
  - b. Is any amount of bread worth such a price?
4. After about ten years, Naomi’s two sons also died.
  - a. Naomi is left widowed, childless, without financial support, in a foreign land.
  - b. One always finds more problems than he solves by going into a far country.

### C. The Farewell (1:6-14)

1. Thus, Naomi desired to return to the land of Canaan.
2. Naomi allowed her daughters-in-law to choose their own destiny – whether to stay in Moab or journey to Judah.
3. Orpah chose to remain in Moab, but Ruth stayed with Naomi.
  - a. Even today, how many choose home and family over God?
  - b. Ruth is an example of devotion and selflessness.

### D. The Faithfulness (1:15-18)

1. “Whither thou goest, I will go.” - *Even away from home*
2. “Where thou lodgest, I will lodge.” - *Even into poverty*
3. “Thy people shall be my people.” - *Even as a stranger* (Deut. 23:3)
4. “Thy God, my God.” - *Her prime motivation* (Rt. 2:12)
5. “Where thou diest, will I die.” - *A lifelong commitment*

- II. Ruth in Bethlehem (Ruth 1:19-22)
- A. The Return to Bethlehem. (1:19)
  - B. The Results of Her Sojourn. (1:20-22)
    - 1. Though she left with much, she returned empty.
      - a. Compare with Lot (Genesis 19:14-38).
      - b. Compare with the Prodigal (Luke 15).
    - 2. She did not try to hide the consequences of leaving Judah.
  - C. Could you speak with Naomi today, do you think she would suggest making a trip into a far country, away from Jehovah?
- III. Ruth in the Fields (Ruth 2:1-23)
- A. The Person named Boaz (2:1)
    - 1. He was a kinsman of Naomi's husband, Elimelech.
    - 2. He was the son of Salmon and Rahab (Matthew 1:5).
  - B. The Providence of God (2:2-3)
    - 1. The word "hap" actually means, "*unforeseen meeting or event, chance, fortune, accident or happening.*"
    - 2. However, it was no mere accident that Ruth was working in the field that belonged to Boaz.
  - C. The Price of Character (2:4-17)
    - 1. The character of Boaz.
      - a. A caring master (vs. 4)
      - b. A generous steward (vs. 5-7, 13-16)
        - i. Leviticus 19:9-10
        - ii. 1 Corinthians 4:2; Matthew 25:14-30
      - c. A compassionate friend (vs. 8-9)
    - 2. The character of Ruth.
      - a. A diligent worker (vs. 7, 17)
      - b. A humble stranger (vs. 10)
      - c. A faithful friend (vs. 11)
      - d. A trusting servant (vs. 12)
  - D. The Pleasure of Naomi (2:18-23)
    - 1. Ruth provides for her mother-in law.
    - 2. Boaz provides for his near kin.
    - 3. God provides for His faithful!
    - 4. Thus, Naomi encourages Ruth not to separate herself from the source of grace.

#### Conclusion:

- 1. God was the source of grace and blessing to His people.
- 2. Naomi has come full circle in her relationship with God.
- 3. May we never choose to remove ourselves from such a good and gracious God!