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The Book of Ruth

Ruth, Romance & Redemption

Outline: Chapters 1-4

Ruth's Right Choice – in the land of Moab

Ruth's Right Character – in the fields of Boaz

Ruth's Right Conduct – at Boaz's threshing floor

Ruth's Right Crown – the heart and home of Boaz

Sorrow: *Ruth Weeping*

Service: *Ruth Working*

Submission: *Ruth Waiting*

Satisfaction: *Ruth Wedding*

Chapter 1

*The family makes a bad decision and exchanges
one famine for three funerals*

Unbelief: trying to run from our problems (Chapter 1:1-5)

1. The Time – the time of the Judges “*In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*”

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2. The Place – Bethlehem – “house of bread”
 - Bethlehem was where Rachel was buried
 - Bethlehem was the home of Elimelech and Naomi
 - Bethlehem is where David was born
 - Bethlehem is mentioned in Micah 5:2
“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”
 - Bethlehem is where Jesus was born

3. The Decision – What do we do when trouble comes?
 - Endure the trial but risk becoming bitter
 - Escape the trial and miss God’s purpose/plan
 - Enter the trial and allow God to teach us, to increase our faith and to help us grow

Elimelech chose to escape the trial

- He walked by sight and not by faith – *“But without faith it is impossible to please him” ~ Hebrews 11:6*
- He focused on the physical instead of the spiritual
- He honored the enemy instead of the Lord – They left God’s people and their land
(Moabites were enemies of Israel)

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4. The Consequences

Naomi – pleasant, lovely, delightful

Elimelech – God is my king

Mahlon – sickly

Chilion – weak, wasting away

Ruth – friendship

Orpah – fawn, neck

- Ungodly Neighbors

Living among the heathen

- Unexpected Deaths

Elimelech died and his two sons died

- Unhealthy Marriages

Israelites were not to marry with the heathen nations

Moabites were wicked people

Deuteronomy 23:3 An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever:

- Unreasonable Time there

Ten years

~When we disobey God, we put others lives in jeopardy – our actions affect those around us

~When we disobey God, we take responsibility for our own destiny

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Deception: trying to hide our mistakes (Chapter 1:6-18)

1. The testimony of Naomi
 - What she had heard
She had heard about how God was blessing in Bethlehem
Luke 15:17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!
 - What she came to realize
She realized that she should return to Bethlehem
 - What she had in mind
Her decision to return was right, but her motive seemed to be that of physical food instead of spiritual fellowship
wrong
She was returning to her land, but not to her Lord
 - What she desired
She wanted Ruth and Orpah to stay there in Moab
She felt hopeless – she was too old to have another husband and to bear more sons to give Ruth & Orpah husbands

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- What she said
The hand of God is against me
It grieveth me – this makes me bitter
*She may not have wanted to take the girls
back to her homeland because of their
nationality*

- 2. The testimony of Orpah
 - Decision to leave involved her relatives
What God wants or what your family wants?
*Luke 14:26 If any man come to me, and hate not his
father, and mother, and wife, and children, and
brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he
cannot be my disciple.*
(Our love for our family in comparison to our
love for God)
 - Decision to leave involved her religion

- 3. The testimony of Ruth
 - Details
 - Friendship – I will go
 - Family – I will lodge
 - Future – My people
 - Faith – My God
 - Funeral – I will die (till death do us part)
 - Difficulties
 - Her past upbringing
 - Her present circumstance
 - Her future somewhat unknown

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Bitterness: blaming God for our trials (Chapter 1:19-22)

1. Naomi's Reasons for Returning Home
 - She had heard that the famine was over and that there was food in Bethlehem
 - She saw that Ruth was steadfastly minded to go with her
 - She knew that God was dealing with her (The Lord hath brought her home again)

God still cares for us and loves us when we are away from Him

2. Naomi's Reception when she got home
 - The people were surprised – the people were moved (stirred) – *it has been 10 years since we have seen you last*
 - The people were shocked – is this Naomi? – *this isn't the Naomi that I remembered*
3. Naomi's Response when she got home – Bitterness
 - Her Spirit – don't call me Naomi (pleasant) – call me Mara (bitter)
 - Her Status – I went out full and I have come back empty

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She had an empty heart – *she felt hopeless*

She had an empty hand – *she returned to Bethlehem for food*

She had an empty home – *her husband/sons were gone*

Although she thought she was empty – she had Ruth and she had the Lord

- Her Sorrow
 - “the hand of the LORD is gone out against me” (vs. 13)
God is against me
 - “the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me (vs. 20)
God did this to me
 - “the LORD hath brought me home again empty” (vs. 21)
God has taken everything from me
 - “the Lord hath testified against me” (vs. 21)
God has spoken against me
 - “the Almighty hath afflicted me” (vs. 21)
God has hurt me

Psalm 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

Psalm 119:71 *It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*

Psalm 119:75 I know, O LORD, that thy judgments *are* right, and *that* thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

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God Almighty – El-Shaddai

Nourish, care, sustain, satisfy, multiply

2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart *is* perfect toward him.

▪ **God was caring for Naomi and Ruth**

~El-Shaddai had taken care of them in the past and

He would continue to care for them in the future

~El-Shaddai was able to give Abram & Sara a son in their old age even when they tried to take matters into their own hands

Genesis 17:1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

▪ **God was providing for Naomi and Ruth**

~El-Shaddai was bringing them home at the beginning of barley harvest

Psalms 91:1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide (lodge) under the shadow of the Almighty.

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Chapter 2

God's Provision for Ruth and Naomi

Food, Family Member, Favor

"They came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest"

1. Boaz, the near Kinsman (vs. 1)

- He was a relative of Elimelech
- He was a wealthy, influential man
- His name means to move quickly

2. Ruth, the Moabitess (vs. 2-3)

- She was submissive to Naomi – she had placed herself under her authority
- She showed initiative in going to glean

Leviticus 19:9-10 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather *every* grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

- She was willing to pick up the leftovers
- She just “happened” to glean at the field of Boaz

There are no accidents with God

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3. Boaz, the land owner (vs. 4-5)

- He is a believer in the Lord
- He is observant of the young lady reaping in his field

4. Ruth, the new girl in town (vs. 6-7)

- She was known in town as the Moabitess woman who came back with Naomi
- She politely asked to glean in the field
- She had been gleaning in the field all morning

5. Boaz, provision and protection (vs. 8-9)

- Stay here in my field
- Stay close to the other women here
- The men will not harm you
- Drink water with us

6. Ruth, a woman of character (vs.10-12)

- She demonstrated appreciation
Why have you shown such grace to me?
- She demonstrated thankfulness
Why have you recognized me, a foreigner?
- She had a good testimony among others
She had taken care of Naomi
She had left her homeland
- She was trusting in the Lord for provision
Under his wings

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7. Boaz, showing favoritism (vs. 13-16)

- He encouraged Ruth to eat lunch with them
- He offered her food which she accepted
- He instructed his workers to let her glean near them
- He instructed them leave handfuls of grain on purpose for her

8. Ruth, a diligent worker (vs. 17-18)

- She gleaned until evening
- She beat out her grain and ended up with an ephah of barley (about 1 bushel) (7.5 gallons)
- She gave Naomi her leftovers from lunch

9. Naomi, the rejoicer (vs. 19-23)

- The Lord hath not left off his kindness

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A Possible Conversation (2:19-23)

Naomi:	Where did you glean today? What did you accomplish today? Who allowed you to glean in his field? You were able to glean how much?
Ruth:	His name is Boaz—
Naomi:	Did you say Boaz? Praise the Lord – he is a relative of ours, in fact he is a kinsman
Ruth:	He told me to glean only with his hired workers until the end of the harvest
Naomi:	Good, good we want to accept his kindness so we don't want to glean in any other fields
Ruth:	I can't wait until tomorrow

Jewish Customs

~There was a Jewish custom that a brother-in-law could marry his widowed sister-in-law (Deut. 25:5-6)

- Reasons for this levirate marriage

Protection for the widow

Provision for the widow

Procreation for the widow

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~There was a Jewish custom that a family member would buy back (redeem) property for a family member that had lost their inheritance (Lev. 25:25-28)

- Requirements for a kinsman redeemer
 - Relationship (family member)
 - Resources (ability to purchase)
 - Readiness (willingness)

Chapter 3

Naomi's Plan (3:1-2)

- She wanted to find Ruth a place of rest (home)
- She wanted Ruth to be happy

Ruth's Preparation (3:3-5)

- Washing
- Anointing
- Clothing – no more widow's garments
- Presenting – at the right time

The Proposal at Midnight (3:6-9)

- The men were threshing the grain at the close of the day (there would be a cool breeze)
- The men would sleep there all night to protect their harvest
- Ruth came to Boaz and laid at his feet
- Boaz is awakened and startled
 - Who's there?
 - What do you want?

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- Ruth asked Boaz to spread his skirt (wing) over her and perform the duty of a near kinsman

Boaz' Promise (3:10-15)

- He acknowledged her kindness
- He reassured her that he would perform the duty
- He spoke of her testimony – she was virtuous
- He promised her that he would find the nearer kinsman in the morning
- He asked her to continue to rest and leave early in the morning (they wanted to protect their reputation)
- He again supplied her with food

Naomi's Prompting (3:16-18)

- Who are you? Is that you, Ruth? How did it go? Are you the next Mrs. Boaz?
- Sit Still – and wait – he will take care of this today (Exodus 14:13; Psalm 46:10)
- Boaz name means to move quickly

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Chapter 4 – Redemption

1. The Place – 4:1-2

- The gate of the city was the place of business
- The closer kinsman & Boaz meet
- Ten witnesses are called

2. The Proposal – 4:3-4

- Naomi hath sold her land and there is an opportunity to buy it back
- The closer kinsman is given the offer to buy back the land and he agrees

3. The Problem – 4:5-6

- Whoever buys the land of Naomi must also buy it of Ruth and be willing to marry her to raise up a seed of inheritance
- The closer kinsman is not willing to take Ruth and mar his own inheritance (his children could lose their inheritance if he and Ruth had a son)

4. The Procedure – 4:7-10

- The custom for redeeming land was to give your shoe to your neighbor to represent ownership of the land by walking on it
- Boaz buys all that was Elimelech's, Chilion's, and Mahlon's of the hand of Naomi
- Boaz buys the right to marry Ruth and raise up a seed of inheritance

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5. The People give a Blessing – 4:11-12

- Let this Moabitess woman be blessed with children like Rachel and Leah
- May you be famous in Bethlehem
- May you be prosperous like Pharez (their ancestor of Judah)

6. God's gives a Blessing – 4:13-22

- Boaz and Ruth are married and they have a son
- Naomi is blessed with a child to care for in her old age who will be famous
- The son is called Obed – serving
- Obed is the grandfather of King David
- Four women are very important in this genealogy
 - Tamar – who played the harlot (Genesis 38)
 - Rahab – a harlot (Boaz' mother, Matthew 1:5)
 - Ruth – a Moabitess (Deuteronomy 23:3-6)
 - Bathsheba – committed adultery with David (2 Samuel 12:24)