

Read the Book of Ruth: 17 min av. time

8/28/89
Family Camp
at Eagle Fern

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

- I. Elimelech's Family in Moab (Ruth 1:1-5).
- II. Naomi's return to Bethlehem (Ruth 1:6-22).
- III. Ruth, the Gleaner (Ruth 2:1-23).
- IV. Naomi's Plan for Ruth (Ruth 3:1-5).
- V. Ruth's Appeal to Boaz (Ruth 3:6-18).
- VI. Boaz, the Redeemer (Ruth 4:1-12).
- VII. The Family of Boaz and Ruth (Ruth 4:13-22).

The Moabites were descendants of Lot. Moab was his firstborn, the son of Lot's oldest daughter. Cf. Gen. 19:30-38.

Ephrath was the ancient name for ^{the city which was later} Bethlehem. ^{called}

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF RUTH

This is one of the two books in the Bible which carry the names of women as their title. Esther is the other. Esther was a Jewess; Ruth was a Moabite Gentile. Esther was a godly woman living in a Gentile land (Medo-Persia); Ruth was also a godly woman ~~living in~~ ^{who moved to} the land of Israel.

Ruth is one of five women names^d in Matthew's genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, the wife of Uriah (Bathsheba), and Mary, the mother of our Lord. Two of these were Gentiles: Rahab and Ruth. But morally they seem to have been poles apart before they were saved.

We do not know who wrote the Book of Ruth, not do we know when it was written. Keil and Delitzsch (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, p. 469) wrote:

The origin of the book of Ruth is involved in obscurity. From its contents, and more especially from the object so apparent in the close of the book, it may be inferred with certainty that it was not written earlier than the time of David's rule over Israel, and indeed not before the culminating point of the reign of this great king. There would therefore be an interval of 150 to 180 years between the events themselves and the writing of the book, during which time the custom mentioned in chap. iv. 7, of taking off the shoe in acts of trade and barter, which formerly existed in Israel, may have fallen into disuse, so that the author might think it necessary to explain the custom for the information of his contemporaries.

But, in order that we may appreciate the purpose, or purposes, of this Book, let us recognize them now so that we may have a better appreciation of the Book as we examine it together.

Let me mention at least ~~five~~ ^{six} ~~four~~ purposes.

- 1) The mention of the times of "the days when the judges ruled" in 1:1 would indicate that this story shows that the work of the Lord never comes to a complete halt even in the worst of times. The Book of Ruth is a pleasant contrast to the repeated instances of apostacy in Israel during the times of the judges. The Book of Ruth leaves a better impression on our hearts about the work of the Lord when spiritual life was at a very low level. And this should be an encouragement to us today when the work of the Lord is not flourishing.

This surely points to the sovereignty of God over His work and over His purposes.

- 2) We see further evidence of God's sovereignty when, through the apparent disobedience of Elimelech and Naomi in going to Moab, the Lord graciously overruled so that His purposes were not only not hindered, but actually furthered. We see this because Boaz and Ruth were in the godly line which eventually was the family through which our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world.

And all of this was done even though Naomi, a child of God, encouraged Ruth to go back to her gods with her sister-in-law.

- 3) In the salvation of Ruth we not only see the grace of God toward Gentiles in the Old Testament, but we see how God worked even through the disobedience of His children in order to reach a Gentile

Introduction to the Book of Ruth (2)

woman in a foreign land. This does not justify what Elimelech and Naomi did, but it shows that God is greater than our unbelief, and our continued failure to trust Him.

4) We see evidence of distinguishing grace of God.

God does not work in the hearts of all people in exactly the same way. Orpah went back to her people, and to her god; Ruth refused to go back. She stayed with her mother-in-law, Naomi, even though Naomi objected, and made the Israelites her people, and made Israel's God her God.

Naomi was anything but a good witness, and yet the Spirit's work in Ruth's heart was so strong that nothing could keep her from going with Naomi to Bethlehem. And this is all the more amazing when we realize that Ruth had been raised in a nation where there was great hostility toward the Jews.

5) *Prophetic of the coming of Christ, the Messiah*

So this is a very important Book, the Book of Ruth, tying together, as it does, the period of the judges with the period of the kings. It speaks of:

- 1) The imperfection of the people of God.
- 2) The sovereignty of God.
- 3) The judgment of God.
- 4) The providence of God (which is a part of His sovereignty).
- 5) The grace of God.
- 6) The perseverance of the saints.
- 7) The sufficiency of God.

It takes between 15 and 20 minutes to read it aloud. Please try to read it at least once a day while we are considering it together. If you do, the blessing will be greater for you.

6) *For the strengthening of our faith and the improvement of our fellowship with God.*

THE BOOK OF RUTH

F. B. Meyer wrote in the introduction to his book on John the Baptist,

I know of nothing that makes so pleasant a respite from the pressure of life's fret and strain, as to bathe mind and spirit in the translucent waters of Scripture biography.

The Book of Ruth is one of those Scripture biographies. It might not be as complete as we would like for it to be. Scripture biographies never are complete, even the life of our Lord given in the four Gospels, but they fit the purpose of God for us. And so it is important for us to see what the message of each biography is for us.

I. Elimelech's Family in Moab (Ruth 1:1-5). *An illness of Judges 21:25 - not idolatry, nor blasphemy, nor immorality, but self-will, walking men.*
1:1 This was a famine during the period of the judges. A famine in the land of Israel was evidence of divine judgment. It appears from what Elimelech could have learned from Abraham's experience (Gen. 12), and from the Lord's refusal to let Isaac do what his father had done (Gen. 26), that what he did was not the will of God! He did not wait to see how the Lord would have provided for them, but moved ahead on his own. So his problem was a lack of faith. We not only miss many blessings, but we greatly complicate our lives, and the lives of others, by our unwillingness to wait upon the Lord.

How Elimelech and Naomi came to the decision that they did, we do not know. But, from the events which followed, it would seem that Naomi might have had a major part in the decision.

1:2 Here Elimelech's name appears first in the Book, followed by the name of his wife, Naomi, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion.

1:3 Elimelech died: the first of Naomi's great sorrows.

1:4 Naomi's two sons married Moabite women. And in this they certainly transgressed because they were both Gentiles, and it would seem that at the time neither Orpah nor Ruth was saved.

1:5 About 10 years later (v. 4) both Mahlon and Chilion died--and so Naomi's sorrow was greatly increased. *Three Jewish genes in Gentile Moab.*

Verse 1 tells us that they went to Moab "to sojourn." They planned to stay until the famine was over in the land, and then they would go back to Bethlehem. But neither Elimelech nor his two sons ever had that opportunity. The cost of disobedience is often very high.

Moab was the archenemy (a principal enemy) of Israel. Balaam, king of Moab, had tried to get Balaam to curse Israel. Cf. Num 22-24.

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THE BOOK OF RUTH

II. Naomi's Return to Bethlehem (Ruth 1:6-22).

1:6 Naomi was facing severe trials in Moab; the Lord had restored blessing to Judah. So she prepared to go back to Bethlehem ALONE!

We have in chapter 1 a thoroughly depressed and discouraged Naomi.

1:8, 9 Her prayer for her daughters in law. They all "went." After losing their husbands, they then faced the prospect of losing each other. Cf. also v. 14.

1:14 Orpah decided to stay; Ruth was intent on going.

"Cleave," from פָּרַד, indicates that Ruth was bound to Naomi. She felt a union with Naomi which was stronger than that which she felt to her parents, her ~~native~~ people, and her homeland.

1:15 We see the depth of Naomi's despair her in sending both of her daughters-in-law back to their gods, or god.

However, there ~~had to~~ ^{must} have been times before this when Naomi's testimony was bright + clear. But now she was completely demoralized + saw no value, spiritually or any other way, for Ruth + Orpah to stay w/ her.

1:16, 17 This is not a marriage vow, and really should not be used that way. This was a testimony of Ruth's faith. Note: How impossible it is to keep a true believer away from the people of God!

"Intreat" (from נָדַח) means to assail a person, urging them to do something (in this case, against Ruth's will). "Intreat" means to jump on a person + insist that they do something. PRESSURE! From chapters 2 + 3 where Naomi told Ruth what to do, and she did it, we can see that it was not like her to resist Naomi. But where questions of faith are concerned, faith prevails!

Cf. Acts 4:19, 20, "Whether it be right in the sight of God..."

Acts 5:29, "We ought to obey God..."

Isa. 84:10 "For a day in thy courts... I had rather be..."

Heb. 11:24-26 By faith Moses..."

When the Lord called Boaz + Ork + James + John they left the assembly of their business to follow the Lord.

Notice that Ruth said that she wanted Naomi, ^{her} people, ^{her} Naomi's God. And this was not ^{just} a word ~~for~~ or a year, or 10 years, but for life!

1:16 When Naomi said that Ruth "was steadfastly minded" (from 1:16) - firmly resolved. There was no possibility of changing her mind. So she didn't bring the subject up any more.

1:19 When Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem, "all the city was moved about them," i.e., they were excited, they were dismayed, amazed. The feminine form of the verbs indicate that it was the women who were the most disturbed - not (as R + D said) that she was alive, nor that she had come back, but because she was very obviously depressed + unhappy. Apparently she had been a happy person (as her name would suggest): gracious, pleasant, but her servants had taken their toll upon her appearance.

This explanation is supported by 1:20. ^{Domestic violence is a common cause of property + departure.}

1:20 Or 1:13 Naomi told her daughters-in-law, "... the Lord of the Lord in Gent out against me." ^{of the Lord in Gent out against me.}
^{He said to her, "and the Lord will be very kind to me," and she said, "the Lord will be kind to me," and she said, "the Lord will be kind to me."}
 The Almighty had afflicted me. ^{she said that brought me home again empty.}
 There is no comfort but that Naomi said the Lord in all of her troubles.

note how Naomi spoke of God there as "the Almighty" - none in the OT after Moses day + Job. ^{not only} the sovereignty of God but Naomi had been leaning about the sovereignty of God but the suffering. He knew how to trust in Him, + not to turn to Egypt or Moab. This is the idea in the Almighty. ^{cf. Gen. 17:1, 28:3, Ex. 6:3.}

1:2-1 "Full" - possibly w/ money, but mainly w/ her family, a rich wife and mother. But now they were all gone - and there was no possibility that she could have any more. But more than that, they could never be replaced.

"Testified" - in the circumstances of her life. This is not always the case when there is a rapid series of deaths, but Naomi knew that it was in her case.

The idea here is of a judge responding w/ his decision. Naomi knew more than ever what it means to fear the Lord.

1:22 The ~~game~~ was over, as we learned in 1:6. Trials have their purpose, but they also have an end, as one ~~commentator~~ has stated.

Reference to the barley harvest (which was the first of the ~~harvests~~) leads to the gleaning that Ruth did in chapter 2.

III. Ruth, the Gleaner (2:1-23)

Small chapter gives us a picture of Ruth's humility. She had never done any gleaning in her homeland. The rabbis taught that she was of royal blood.

2:1 The first mention of Boaz, Elimelech's relative.

2:2 On gleaning, cf. Lev. 19:9, 10. This meant that Ruth and Naomi were poor. Perhaps Naomi was too old to do this work.

"Glean" - to gather what is left over after the reapers have harvested a crop.

2:3 "Her hap" - meaning, just it happened. And the idea is that by accident, or chance. She was lucky!

This is the way it appeared - that she came to a field which Boaz owned. She did not plan it this way, but this is what transpired.

But what actually was happening?

This was, as Boole wrote, an event "ordered and designed by God's providence" (I, p. 508). God was at work. Boaz and Ruth were being brought together.

2:4 Then Boaz came, greeting his reapers in the name of the Lord. What a privilege to have an employer like this! And what a privilege for a farmer to have reapers like they were!

2:5 Then Boaz noticed Ruth. The Lord was in this, too. Perhaps it was the fact that she was a foreigner. Perhaps it was her beauty. Perhaps it was her very obvious virtues. ^{She was a hard worker. See 2:7} But whatever it was, it was the Lord.

2:8, 9 Boaz told her to stay in his field. And not to go elsewhere. He provided refreshment for her. He protected her from the young men.

2:10 Ruth's gratitude and amazement that she would receive such treatment. "Why?" she asked. ^{This was Ruth's question.}

2:11, 12 Boaz had heard about her & had probably wished that he could meet her. He blessed her, and said that he knew she was trusting in "the Lord God of Israel," meaning that she was a child of God! ^{So he was attracted to her because of her faith.}

to go out into the field to glean and to go out into the blessing of the Lord.

Ruth 2:1-23 (2)

2:13 She recognized again Boaz' great kindness to her. She looked to Boaz that his goodness to her might continue.

2:14-17 Boaz fed her. Then he told ~~the~~ the men to let her glean among the sheaves, & even to purposely leave some of the harvest on the ground so Ruth could get it.

Boaz did everything he could do to help her - all a part of what the Lord was doing! He again told the young men not to "reproach her." Cf. 4:9. They were not to shame her, nor to disgrace her. She beat out what she had gleaned, and she had an ^{anna} ~~sheaf~~ ^{of} barley - or almost so. This is about a bushel ^{all} ~~all~~, 4 pecks, ³² quarts.

2:18-23

2:18 Ruth took the barley to Naomi.

2:19 She told Naomi what had happened.

* 2:20 This was the point at which Naomi began to see once again the hand of God and the blessing of God in her life. She had reached bottom, and now the Lord was preparing to restore her. ^{The last statement of the verse indicates that it was the truth of God that had revived her soul.} I wonder how many here today know what Naomi had been going through. She saw things turn against her when Elieloh died. Then she saw it again when her sons died. She was brought low in poverty, but did not realize at the time what the Lord was doing when Ruth insisted on going with her.

But now she sees it, or begins to see it, and this leads to what we shall see ~~beginning~~ in chapters 3 & 4.

2:21-23 ^{Ruth} ~~Naomi~~ continued to work until the end of the barley harvest.

... to show the inheritance of the land
Deut 25 " " " " continuation of the husband's
name.

The land was the Lord's. He had given it to
Israel in ³ threefold way:

- 1) All the land to the nation
- 2) Portions of the land to each tribe.
- 3) Sections of the tribal areas to each family within
the tribe.

So what we are dealing w/ here is the subject of the
inheritance of ~~the inheritance of~~ Elimelech within the tribe
of Judah.

God had judged Naomi in 4 ways:

- 1) Her husband died.
- 2) ^{Her sons,} The heirs of her husband, had died.
- 3) There were no grandchildren.
- 4) Naomi had been reduced to poverty. (Go to the back of
the next page.) *

IV. Naomi's plan for Ruth (Num. 3:1-5).

If I am right in assuming, from the evidence we have seen thus far, that Naomi was a strong-willed person, one who ~~sees~~ ^{goes} to ~~have~~ ^{get} ~~down~~ ^{after} what she wanted, + then went after it, this chapter fits the pattern. And it shows that there are times when, to be such a person, is good - when a person goes after the right thing. ^{A strong will} It can be bad, but it can also be good!

3:1-4 Naomi obviously knew what needed to be done, and the attention Boaz gave to Ruth + encouraged her to "seek rest" for Ruth. This meant to provide the happiness and security which she would find in having land and a husband.

Naomi was being forced to sell the land that had been her husband's because of her poverty. The land belonged to the Lord + to the particular tribe to which it had been given by the Lord. Therefore, to stay in the tribe + in the family, the best one to redeem it was a relative, and the closest relative would be a brother.

Since, apparently, Elimelech had no brother, the closest relative was the one who had the right and the responsibility to redeem the land, ^{and} it became customary to raise up children for the childless widow, and the child ^{child} would then be the heir.

This takes us back to passages like Lev. 25 and Deut. 25, ^{in the OT} and to Luke 20:27-40. ^(The land was the Lord's, vv. 23-55)

vv. 5-10 ^A Boaz was a relative. Boaz had shown interest in Ruth. What Naomi told Ruth to do was their way of showing that Ruth was interested in him, + his right to redeem. There was nothing indecent nor improper in what Ruth did. She was fully clothed - and so was Boaz. ^{She was lying crossways at his feet.} By her action that she + Naomi desired the redemption, and that they wanted him to do it.

Ruth + Naomi knew that Boaz was a righteous man.

Series on the Book of Philippians
Scripture reading: Philippians 4:1-4
Sermon #15
December 16, 1984
PROOFS THAT CHRIST IS LORD
L. Wight Custis

In Philippians chapter 4 you will not

(No to double asterisks [**] on other side of this page.)

reading up to asterisks [**]
There were no men at this time, no least relatives,
poverty which made this necessary, and it had the feel
Borg was according to 2:20. It was not only their
was the reputation. And put what the interest in
what more did the man not only the night, but in

- 1) the night - a relative.
- 2) the will - to do it.
- 3) the ability to do it.
- 4) the nature of love.

In order to make the last Borg feel to have:

But who was the first to the land.
clearly relative + was asked to make the land and
story of first as "the first relative." It was the
last. But in why we speak of Borg in the
the land, many the widow, and present the
So, in that case, the clear relative could make
In order to make there were no more, no kind.

* (from back of preceding page)
continued

3:5 Ruth ~~faithfully~~ ^{promised to do} ~~did~~ what Naomi told her to do, ~~knowing~~ that very important spiritual issues were involved.

V. Ruth's Appeal to Boaz (Ruth 3:6-18).

3:6, 7 ^{Ruth} ~~Naomi~~ did what Naomi told her to do. Ruth had to make the appeal since she was the wife of Mahlon, the heir.

3:8-11 Boaz discovered that Ruth was at his feet, and ~~promised~~ to do what she requested.

3:12 There was one problem: There was one man who was a closer relative than Boaz was.

3:13 Boaz would check w/ him first. If he wanted to act as the ~~kinsman-redeemer~~ - redeemer, then Boaz would not, and could not. But if he did not, then Boaz would - and he gave this promise to Ruth.

3:14 K + D (p. 483) quoted Berthelemy (?) who wrote, The modest man... even in the middle of the night did not hesitate for a moment what it was his duty to do with regard to the... woman towards whom he felt already so strongly attached; he made his own personal inclinations subordinate to the traditional custom (my comment: the Word of God), and only when this permitted him to marry Ruth was he ready to do so. And not knowing whether she might not have to become the wife of the nearer (kinsman), he was careful for her and her reputation, in order that he might hand her over ~~subordinated~~ to the man who had the undoubted right to claim her as his wife.

Boaz was concerned for Ruth in 2 ways:

1) He did not want her to return to Naomi in the dead

of the night ~~because~~ of the possibility of her being done to her.

- 2) He did not want what she had done to be known ~~because~~ he knew that her actions, and his, would be misinterpreted - as they have been.

I will not defend the way Naomi + Ruth went about this, but we can be sure that nothing immoral was going on. Boaz was a godly man; Ruth was a godly woman.

3:15 Again, this provision was evidence of the love that Boaz already had for Ruth, and of his desire to help Naomi.

3:16 "Who art thou, my daughter?" This means, what did you accomplish? Or, "as what person, in what circumstances dost thou come?" (K + D, p. 486). Naomi wanted to know if her mission to Boaz had been successful.

3:17 Boaz's gift of barley indicated to Naomi that Ruth had been successful.

3:18 And Naomi knew that they would soon know who the redeemer would be.

VI. Boaz, the Redeemer (Ruth 4:1-12).
Naomi had sold the land. Now it must be redeemed.

4:1 Here we have what we could call, an ancient court scene where legal matters were transacted.

The gate of the city was the place. Anyone, who, like Lot in Gen. 19:1, "sat in the gate of Sodom," was, as we would say, a city commissioner, an elder, or a judge. It was usually an open place, and would (although sometimes covered)

Have been very public.

The nearest kinsman came by, and Boaz asked him to sit down.

4:2 He also asked the elders to sit down. Such action would also attract the attention of the people. These would all act as witnesses.

4:3,4 The case was presented by Boaz to the nearest relative, and he agreed to redeem the land.

4:5,6 However, when he learned that he also would have to marry Ruth, he reneged, saying, ~~But~~ "Best I may mine own inheritance." But that he apparently meant that he would pay money out of his inheritance which eventually would go to any son he might have by Ruth, thus depleting his inheritance by that much.

Evidently the first heir had a family; Boaz did not.

4:7,8 This is a modified form of Deut. 25:9,10 - perhaps showing in this instance that sometimes grace was exercised.

Nevertheless, the nearest of kin gave up his right to be the redeemer by giving up his shoe. So Ruth did not take it off. Nor did she spit in his face. BUT THE WAY WAS NOW OPEN FOR BOAZ TO REDEEM THE LAND, MARRY RUTH, AND, HOPEFULLY, HAVE A SON AND HEIR TO ELMEECH'S PROPERTY.

4:9-11a The settlement was confirmed by the witnesses. The details were clearly stated by Boaz. This was like the signing of a contract.

4:11b,12 The prayer of the witnesses. The will of God had been carefully observed.

Num.
7:8-11

Therefore, their prayer was in accordance with God's will. Cf. 1 John 5:14, 15.

To wish that Ruth could become a mother like Rachel and like Leah, the two mothers ~~of~~ from whom the tribes of Israel came, was the greatest blessing they could ask for any woman. ^{Children were from the Lord, and an evidence of His blessing.}

And they saw in all of these circumstances a parallel w/ a former Gentile woman, Tamar, who gave birth to ^{an illegitimate son,} Perez, who was a twin (Zarah was the other twin). And who was Boaz' mother? RAHAB.

GRACE is written all over these verses.

VII. THE FAMILY OF BOAZ AND RUTH (Ruth 4:13-22).

4:13 The faithfulness of God.

The Lord caused Ruth to conceive, and He gave her a son.

The child had a Gentile mother (Ruth), and a Gentile grandmother (Rahab).

A son is what they needed; a son is what they got.

4:14,¹⁵ The women praised the Lord, and anticipated what ^{her} ~~the~~ son ^{would} ~~be~~ become to her.

The "kinsman" mentioned here is her baby boy.

Why would his name become "famous in Israel"?

Because he would be in the Messianic line. Also, ^{Perhaps also because his mother was a godly Gentile,} because he would be the grandfather of King David.

The women prayed that he would be two things to his grandmother, Naomi:

- 1) "A restorer of thy life." He would bring her back spiritually to the place she was before. What a blessing. Obed would be! We need more Obed's today - not sons and grandsons who will be a grief and a heartache to their parents and grandparents. ^{To} Honor ^{one's} parents is not popular today, but it has the greatest priority with God.

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RUTH (Teacher Training Class)

11/6/63

Time: During the period of the Judges.

(Speak of the character of these days.)

Circumstances: Famine - divine judgment.

This judgment continued in Moab as well as in Israel.

Lessons: 1. The high cost of disobedience. ^{Elimelech made poor decision, but his family shared the benefits.}

2. The purpose of God. The last five verses of the chapter indicate that this story has Messianic overtones. Mt. 1:5 confirms this. God never loses sight of His own purposes.

3. The overruling power of God. Though the circumstances were not pleasing to Him, yet He was able to use unfortunate circumstances to bring salvation to at least one (Ruth) who might not have known Him otherwise.

Also, it is important to note how every detail of the circumstances involving Naomi, Ruth, Boaz, the nearest kinsman, and the land all worked out perfectly.

4. The testimony of a life (Naomi's), even when she ^(Naomi) was unaware that there was any.

★ 5. The value of submission to God and to His people. This was Ruth's experience.

- (1) "To present a supplement to my 1st & 2nd studies, 'The Book of Judges';
- (2) "To show the true spirit of Israel;
- (3) "To exhibit once more the mysterious connection between Israel and the Gentiles,
- (4) "To trace the genealogy of David" (Vol. III, p. 179).

RUTH

9/3/63

~~the "Moab" - descendants of Lot (Gen. 19:37), and the circumstances here are similar to those which caused Abraham and Lot to go to Egypt in Gen. 12.~~

9/4/63

1:2 "Ephrathites" - according to Gen. 35:19, Ephrath was another name for Bethlehem - possibly the original name.

2:17 "an ephah of barley" -

3:15 "six measures of barley" -

PURPOSES FOR THE BOOK:

(1) To show the character of God:

(a) His compassion for his people in distress.

(b) His grace: Boaz was the son of Rahab, and Ruth the Moabitess became his wife - both of these women thus were linked with the Messianic line.

(2) To prepare the way for David -- God's providence. From David was to come the Messiah.

(3) As to its typical significance:

(a) Ruth: the Church.

(b) Boaz: Christ.

Ruth is a book of contrast and transition:

- (1) Of contrast with the times of the Judges although the events recorded took place during that time.
- (2) Of transition from the time of the Judges to the time of the Kings.

Graham Scroggie expressed the contrast in the following words:

"In Judges is war, but here (in Ruth) is peace. In Judges is cruelty, but here is kindness. In Judges is idolatry, but here is the worship of the true God. In Judges is villainy, but here is virtue. In Judges is lust, but here is love. In Judges is disloyalty, but here is devotion. This story is like a pure lily in a mistral pond" (The Unfolding Drama of Redemption, Vol. I, p. 224).

Ruth was
the wife
of Mahlon
(Ruth 4:10)

Outline of Ruth 1

I. Judgment and sin (1:1-5).

- A. Judgment: the famine.
- B. Sin: Elimelech's departure to Moab.
- C. Judgment: the death of Elimelech.
- D. Sin: the marriages of Mahlon and Chilion.
- E. Judgment: the deaths of Mahlon and Chilion.

II. Naomi's decision to return to Judah (1:6-18).

- A. A commendable decision (1:6). Note the reason it was finally made.
- B. Naomi and her daughters-in-law (1:7-18).
 - 1. Her concern for them (1:7-13).
 - ~~By~~ By prayer (v. 8, 9).
 - Because they had been involved in the Lord's dealings with her (v. 13).
 - 2. The different decisions of Orpah and Ruth (1:14).
 - 3. Ruth's declaration of love for Naomi and of faith in God (1:15-18).

III. Naomi and Ruth's return to Bethlehem (1:19-22).

RUTH

Date: Probably around the time of Sideon (Judges⁶) since this is the only reference to a famine. Cf. Judges 6:1-6. Other dates are supposed for various reasons, but this seems to be the most logical.

Writer: Generally accepted to be Samuel. He would have had a definite reason for showing that David's genealogy was a fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy by connecting it with Pharez, the son of Judah (cf. Num. 26:20, 21; Ruth 4:18-22). Obviously, this was one of the major reasons for the writing of the book.

Chapter 1

The Word of God is very accurate in giving the faults of the people of God, as well as their merits. (The canonicity of the book receives attestation by Malak's mention of Ruth in 1:5.) Often people like Naomi are a disappointment to us. But we must not overlook what Jamieson describes in the following words:

"The story detailed in the book is extremely interesting. The distress of Naomi, the bereavements in her family, her steadfast and pious life, which won so completely the affections of Ruth (italics mine), as induced her, though a foreigner and bred a heathen, to prefer the society of her aged mother-in-law to that of her Moabite relatives, to remove with her to the land of Israel, and finally to adopt her religion, for the elements of a domestic narrative, in the progress of which our sympathies are strongly enlisted" (Vol. II, p. xv).

1:1 "Moab" - descendants of Lot (Gen. 19:37), and the circumstances here are similar to those which caused Abraham and Lot to go to Egypt (Gen. 12), and Jacob and his sons later

(Gen. 46). However, time out of the land may prove very costly, particularly to the children (cf. Lot's daughters; here, Elimelech's sons).

Examine in a faint flowing with milk and honey, and in Bethlehem the house of bread. What a paradox!

In marrying Moabite women they violated the Mosaic law (Deut. 7:1-4; 23:3). Jewish writers taught that the death of these sons was divine judgment. (Even the famine was a judgment for sin [Lev. 26:19, 20]). On plenty in Moab, cf. Gen. 48:11.

1:2 "Elimelech" = my God is king. This doubtless expressed his parents' desire for him, and it is possibly significant that Mahlon and Chilion did not marry Moabite women until after their father's death. He may have restrained them from such alliances.

It is for this reason we need to be careful about our decisions. What may not be dangerous for us can be disastrous for our children!

What if all of these had left like Elimelech? God was king in some respects, but not in others.

M. Henry says that Elimelech manifested a lack of faith in God by going to Moab. He were out "full" (1:21) so his need could not have been desperate. He lacked the contentment of Paul in Phil. 4. He was "in the land" and should have stayed there. God could ^{have} met his need.

1:3-5 Sins unto death. "For whosoever ~~he that~~ will save his life shall lose it" (Mark 8:35). Cf. Isa. 47:9 - the two greatest tragedies took place in Naomi's life. Let us not be too hard on her. They had fled to avoid death, but death followed them.

1:6 Judgment has a purpose and judgment has an end. It is commendable that Naomi wanted to return.

1:7-15 Evidently neither Ruth nor Orpah had

turned to the Lord at this time, and so it is remarkable to see the marvelous relationships this pious mother-in-law had with her pious daughters-in-law! (That they were pious is given by v. 15, "unto her gods".)

1:8, 9 Naomi's prayer for her daughters-in-law.

1:13 Naomi did not blame her husband or her sons; she blamed herself. This is a confession. And this is also the attitude of heart that profits from affliction.

1:15 Naomi can be justified in sending them back because going to the promised land must never be on the basis of human attachment. Ruth in the following verses gives a declaration of her own faith in God.

1:16, 17 - Ruth's dedication to Naomi, to Naomi's home, people, God. Her dedication will outlive Naomi, and nothing but death will separate them. What determination to play in fellowship!

1:19 "Is this Naomi?"

1:20, 21 Naomi's testimony - "The Almighty, full... empty." There is an emptiness in fullness and a fullness in emptiness. Note her humility, always a companion of suffering, and (as the rest of the book shows) a forerunner of blessing.

The Almighty - Eldadai, "the God who gives fruitfulness and increase" (Ederheim, III, 182).

Re: gleaning - cf. Lev. 19:9, 10; 23:22; Deut. 24:19-22.
Note esp. the emphasis on "the stranger."

In this chapter also we continue to see Ruth's love for Naomi, which A. Whyte describes as "pure as gold and ^{as} strong as death... And her confession of love... is the most beautiful confession of love in all the world" (Bible Characters, Vol. I, p. 201).

Ruth 2

9/14/63

This chapter tells us how Ruth provisionally came into contact with Boaz. The chapter provides us with excellent character studies as we read of Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi. Certain things stand out.

(1) Ruth's industry (v. 2).

(a) She did not want to go back to Moab because she was hungry.

(b) She did not rebel against God in the face of this new trial.

(c) She did not wait ~~to~~ for Naomi to tell her to go to work.

Note: The trial was the occasion the Lord used to meet Ruth and Naomi's needs permanently. Often the thing we would avoid is God's gracious plan for our future blessing.

- (d) She went out and sought a job. Cf. v. 7.
(e) She stayed with the job until it was finished. (v. 23).
- (2) Boaz's piety. See his prayer in vv. 4, 12.
- (3) Boaz's business acumen (sharpness, keenness in intellectual and practical matters). He knew how to take care of his business.
- (4) Boaz's graciousness. (courtesy) Note all that he did to meet Ruth's need.
- (5) Boaz and Ruth both lived by the highest moral standards, propriety.
- (6) Ruth's humility (v. 10). Cf. also v. 13. (over)
- (7) Ruth's gratitude (v. 13). She did not forget to say "thank you".
- (8) Ruth's submission:

(a) Returning to Naomi (v. 18).

(b) Working with the maidens instead of the men at Naomi's suggestion (vv. 21-23).

It was
little love
for Naomi
over her
her out of
most into
the blessing
of Jesus Christ.
(Whyte, I, p. 202).
Cf. 1:8; 2:11; 4:15.

Their trials did not
cease when they
got back into the land.
There was no famine,
but there was
poverty.

"Parents should take care to enquire into the ways of their children, how, and where, and in company they spend their time. This may prevent many extravagancies ~~with~~ which children, left to themselves, run into, by which they bring both themselves and their parents to shame" (M. Henry, Vol. II, p. 265).

Re: HUMILITY. "It will become us all to think meanly of ourselves, and to take notice of that in ourselves which is diminishing, esteeming others better than ourselves" (M. Henry, II, p. 264).

- ← (9) Naomi's parental concern as to where Ruth had spent the day (v. 19).
(10) Naomi's piety (prayers (vv. 19, 20)).
(11) Naomi's propriety in having Ruth work rather than to take advantage of her relationship with Boaz. Cf. v. 22.

Note: Ruth does not talk about the Lord like Naomi and Boaz do - evidently because she was young in the faith and unaccustomed to such a manner of speech.

The Law regarding the kinsman (Lev. 25:25) said nothing about marriage. The law regarding marriage included only brothers-in-law (Deut 25:5). So what Naomi was acting on was not legally binding on Boaz, but had evidently developed from the above to apply to the nearest kinsman. The main objective is expressed in Ruth 4:14.

RUTH 3

9/18/63 (See my

the name (to be given)
most involved
was that of
the messiah.

Kinsman - background: Deut. 25:5-10.

The kinsman in order to redeem had to be:

- (1) Related. The right the warrant (authorization or sanction by law)
- (2) Willing. The will
- (3) Able: The wherewithal, to wealth

(a) Financially.

(b) With disturbing his own inheritance.

It is very unlikely that Ruth knew that she was to become a part of the Messianic line. Even the fact that she lived in "the days when the judges ruled" ^(1:1) makes her conduct even more amazing. How could she understand, either, that her story was to become a part of the Word of God, so rich in symbolic meaning!

In turning to the God of Israel (1:16, 17; 2:12), she committed herself, as this chapter shows:

- (1) To the principles of life laid down in the Word of God; i.e., re: the kinsman-redeemer.
- (2) To the authority of her elders. The family relationship in Israel was most binding.
- (3) To the moral standards of a holy God.

These, in turn, led to required:

- (1) Surrender
 - (2) Submission
- } which led to OBEDIENCE.

(3) Sanctity. What Ruth did was completely according to custom, and therefore proper. Everything about Ruth + Boaz's conversation indicates a perfectly proper relationship.

When Boaz spoke of the kinsman who was more closely related than he, it is evident that the Lord and His will came first, even before His love for Ruth. Otherwise, they could have been married without further delay.

3:17 "We mention, without pronouncing any opinion upon it, that some--
alike Jews and Christians--have seen a symbolism in the number six of the measures
of barley which Ruth brought with her, as if days of work and toil were done, and
'rest' about to be granted" (Edersheim, III, 188).

In 3:1 "rest" is also spoken of, and only elsewhere in Ruth in 1:9. The
three words are:

1:9 נַחֲמָנִי - consolation (found in matrimony)

3:1 מִיָּסָד - a settled spot, a home.

3:17 שָׁכַח - to repose, be still, become idle.

3:10 "A virtuous woman" - cf Prov. 31:10

Ruth 4

9/19/63

Cf. Num. 27:8, 11; Deut 25:5; Lev. 25:25.

A kinsman might marry the widow and not be able to redeem the land, but he could not redeem the land without marrying the widow. This is precisely the problem here.

The gate was the place of legal transactions

"And so the story which began in poverty, famine, and exile leads up to the throne of David. Undoubtedly this was the main object for which it was recorded: to give us the history of David's family; and with his genealogy, traced not in every link but in symbolical outline, the Book of Ruth appropriately closes. It is the only instance in which a book is devoted to the domestic history of a woman, and that woman a stranger in Israel. But that woman was the Mary of the Old Testament" (Edersheim, III, 191).

9/27/63

4:1 ~~Write~~ Boaz was a high city official, possibly the chief.

This whole passage speaks of the integrity of Boaz. Though he desired Ruth he wanted her only in the will of God. Walking in the light is the only way to walk in joy.

4:7,8 As the giving of the shoe was a surrender, so the giver surrendered his rights, his rights to tread on the land as his own possession.

4:11,12 - PRAYER, for Ruth + then for Boaz.

4:11 "... like Leah and like Rachel." M. Henry (II, p. 274) suggests, why not like Sarah and Rebekah? Because Sarah had only one and Rebekah had one rejected: Esau. All of Leah and Rachel's sons had a vital part in Israel, and they had many sons.

4:13 - end. As M. Henry suggests, we have here Ruth (1) the wife, (2) the mother, and (3) the daughter-in-law.

4:14 PRAISE at the birth of Obed just as there
had been PRAYER at the marriage of Boaz and
Ruth.

3/74

RUTH

Chapter 1 - The grace of God:

- 1) Blessing even in sorrow.
- 2) God's grace for Ruth

Chapter 2 - The sovereignty of God, in putting Ruth in Boaz's field, in protecting her from the other servants

Chapter 3 - The will of God. For Ruth it meant:

- 1) Obedience (v. 6).
- 2) Patience (v. 18).

Chapter 4 - The blessing of God - in the manner of Jer 33:3; Eph 3:20, 21.