



**The Summit**  
Green Campus of Canton Baptist Temple

# **Resources for Your Life**

Ruth  
5 Sessions

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## Resource Guide

This resource was compiled from the personal Bible study and blog entries created by Tom Hogsed, pastor of the Summit in Green. You can find the original blog entries at [www.tomhogsed.com](http://www.tomhogsed.com).

The **introduction** to this book has been written so the reader has a better understanding of the Biblical author, his purpose in writing, and important points to understand before reading.

Following the introduction, each new page represents a **verse by verse overview** of the Scripture passage. The best way to study is to first read the Scripture verses from your Bible relying on the Holy Spirit to provide understanding and then to support your understanding with the commentary written below.

At the end of each Scripture commentary, there is a short **prayer** written so the reader can personally apply what has been discovered; however, it is suggested that you also pray from your heart in response to God's Word.

Feel free to make your own personal notes in your Bible, on this page, or even in a journal.

If this resource has helped you or you have further questions, please send an e-mail to [tomhogsed@gmail.com](mailto:tomhogsed@gmail.com).

## **Introduction to Ruth**

The book of Ruth is one of only two books in the Old Testament named after a woman (Esther is the other one). Although Ruth is the main character of this writing, she does not appear to be the author of this book bearing her name; in fact, most scholars are unsure of who wrote the words of Ruth. Some have speculated that Samuel is the author, but there is no solid evidence that would lead to absolute certainty.

The story of Ruth takes place during the time when the judges ruled (Ruth 1:1), which was between the years of 1383-1043 BC. Some have speculated by working backwards in the timeline that Ruth's story took place during the rule of Jair (1126 - 1105 BC), which is described in [Judges 10:3-5](#). Even though the events of Ruth took place during the period of the judges, the book was probably not written until sometime during the reign of King David in Israel. The author's reference to David in Ruth 4:17 and the recording of David's genealogy in Ruth 4:18-22 further indicate that the story of Ruth was likely written somewhere following David's rise to the throne (1010 - 971 BC). The book of Ruth connects the time of the judges with Israel's monarchy.

The story of Ruth begins when a famine sweeps across Judah forcing a woman named Naomi, her husband, and their two sons to depart from Israel and travel to the land of Moab (1:1-2). While in Moab, Elimelech (Naomi's husband) died and she was left alone with her two sons, who eventually married wives from Moab. Orpah and Ruth were the names of Naomi's sons' wives. After they had dwelled in Moab for 10 years, both of Naomi's sons die and so she decides to return home to Bethlehem. Naomi released her two daughters-in-law's to return to their homes and remarry; however, Ruth refuses to go home and decides to accompany Naomi back to Bethlehem. The story begins to take shape when Ruth catches the attention of a man named Boaz while she is working in the fields. The two fall in love and Boaz arranges for the redemption of Naomi's land and Ruth's hand in marriage. This love story unfolds as God takes a seemingly helpless circumstance and turns it around for good. Here is a brief overview of the book of Ruth:

Tragedy in Naomi's Family (Ruth 1:1-5)

Naomi and Ruth Return to Bethlehem (Ruth 1:6-22)

Ruth Works in the Field of Boaz (Ruth 2:1-23)

Boaz and Ruth Fall in Love (Ruth 3:1-18)

Boaz Redeems Naomi's Land and Marries Ruth (Ruth 4:1-12)

A Son is born to Boaz and Ruth (Ruth 4:13-17)

Genealogy Connecting Boaz to David (Ruth 4:18-22)

*Dear God, give me understanding as I read this story of redemption.*

## **Ruth 1:1-22**

During the time when the judges ruled in Israel (see the [book of Judges](#)), a big famine swept across the land of Judah which caused many people to leave their homes to find food for their families (1:1a). One of those families departing from Judah in search of food was a couple whose names were Naomi and Elimelech who also had two sons, Mahlon and Chilion (1:1b-2). This family settled in the country of Moab, but soon after Naomi's husband, Elimelech, died and she was left alone with her two sons (1:3). Being in an unfamiliar place without a husband was a very challenging situation for Naomi and her children; however, soon both of Naomi's sons took wives from the women of Moab and their names were Orpah and Ruth (1:4). After ten years of dwelling in the country of Moab, Naomi once again experienced a time of extreme grief when both of her sons died (1:5a). The Scriptures provide no explanation of their deaths. Naomi was now left completely alone having survived both her husband and two sons (1:5b).

Naomi decided to return to Judah because she had heard that there was now food there in her home country (1:6), but instead of forcing her dead sons' wives to return with her, she told them to return to their homes and remarry (1:7-9). Both Orpah and Ruth said, "Surely we will return with you to your people" (1:10), but Naomi insisted that they return to their homes (1:11-13). When the women heard the response of Naomi, Orpah decided to return home but Ruth was determined to go to Judah with Naomi (1:14). Naomi pleaded with Ruth one more time to stay in Moab (1:15), but Ruth spoke these words to her mother-in-law, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!" (1:16-17, NLT). These words of Ruth evidenced a deep love and commitment to her mother-in-law, Naomi, and also served as her confession of faith in the one, true God. Having been raised in Moab, Ruth would have worshiped the false god, Chemosh, but she was declaring that her faith was now in the God of Israel.

When Naomi and Ruth finally arrived in Bethlehem (1:22), the people celebrated Naomi's return and said, "Is this Naomi?" (1:17-18). Naomi answered their question by asking the people of Bethlehem not to call her Naomi but Mara, which means bitter (1:19-20). The death of her husband and two sons had brought Naomi into a deep despondency and she felt as if God had dealt harshly with her (1:21). Although Naomi faced tremendous hurt and tragedy, God's plan was beginning to unfold and He would bring her great blessing through her daughter-in-law, Ruth. Even though tragedy may cause us to doubt God's goodness, He is always at work and will be faithful to those He loves.

*Dear God, when tragedy strikes, I pray that You would help me see Your blessings unfold in my life.*

## Ruth 2:1-23

A famine in the land of Judah [forced Elimelech, Naomi, and their two sons](#) to seek provision in the country of Moab (1:1-2); unfortunately, Elimelech (Naomi's husband) died soon after they arrived in Moab and Naomi was left alone with her two sons (1:3). Her two sons eventually married women of Moab named Orpah and Ruth, but Naomi's sons also died leaving her with only the two daughters-in-law (1:4-5). After all of these devastating setbacks, Naomi decided to return to her home in Judah and told Orpah and Ruth to return to their homes in Moab (1:6-10). Orpah chose to go back home, but Ruth decided to accompany Naomi back to her hometown of Bethlehem in Judah (1:11-15). In an expression of loyalty and faith, Ruth spoke these words to Naomi, "Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!" (1:16-17, NLT).

As Naomi and Ruth began to settle into their new life in Bethlehem, Ruth realized that they would need to help provide food so she asked permission from Naomi to glean the fields (2:2). The Law of Moses commanded that field owners leave the corners of the field as well as the dropped stalks of grain for the poor and needy ([see Deuteronomy 24:19-21](#)). Both Naomi and Ruth would have fallen into this category since they were both widows. Naomi granted permission for Ruth to go into the fields and she happened to enter into the field of Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech, Naomi's deceased husband (2:1, 3). Ruth caught the eye of Boaz, the owner of the field, and he found out that she was the Moabite woman who had returned with Naomi (2:4-7). After finding out who she was, Boaz said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Stay right here with us when you gather grain; don't go to any other fields. Stay right behind the young women working in my field. See which part of the field they are harvesting, and then follow them. I have warned the young men not to treat you roughly. And when you are thirsty, help yourself to the water they have drawn from the well" (2:8-9). Normally, the poor and needy gleaning the fields would come after the reapers had left the field, but Boaz wanted to make sure that Ruth received all that she needed. Upon seeing the kindness of Boaz expressed toward her, she was overwhelmed with his gratitude and said, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner" (2:10). Boaz responded by saying that he had been inspired by her commitment to her mother-in-law and then living among a people whom she did not know (2:11); furthermore, Boaz pronounced a blessing on her that the Lord would repay her good deeds and give her a full reward (2:12). Ruth humbly reacts to Boaz's words and requests that she find favor in his sight because he had comforted her and spoken kindly to her (2:13).

When it was mealtime, Boaz continued his kindness toward Ruth and invited her to eat the food provided for himself and his workers (2:14). After the meal Ruth returned to the field, but Boaz had commanded his workers to allow her to gather food without reproach; in fact, he told them to purposely drop grain so that she could gather as much as she needed (2:15-16). At the end of the day Ruth gathered all the food she had collected in the field (30-40 lbs.) and took it to Naomi, who was overwhelmed by God's provision for them through Boaz (2:17-20). Naomi immediately recognized that this man, Boaz, was one of their close relatives. Ruth told Naomi that Boaz had also invited her to remain in his field for the duration of the harvest season (2:21) and Naomi advised her to listen to the voice of Boaz so that she would be safe from any harm (2:22). Ruth heeded the advice of her mother-in-law and worked in Boaz's field until the end of the harvest (2:23). Naomi and Ruth had experienced great trials in their lifetime, but God sent hope through this man, Boaz.

*Dear God, thank You for bringing individuals into my life who have given me hope. Most of all, I thank You for sending Jesus Christ, who rescued me from sin.*

## Ruth 3:1-18

Elimelech took his wife, Naomi, and their two sons to Moab because [a great famine had plagued the land of Judah](#) (Ruth 1:1-2); however, after they arrived in Moab, Elimelech died and left Naomi alone with her two sons (Ruth 1:3). Eventually, Naomi's two sons married Moabite women named Orpah and Ruth, but the husbands also died leaving Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth as widows (Ruth 1:4-5). Naomi decided to return to Judah and told her daughters-in-law to return to their homes, but Ruth committed to go with Naomi to Bethlehem in Judah (Ruth 1:6-22). Upon their arrival in Bethlehem, Ruth began going to the field of Boaz in order to [gather grain that was left for the poor and needy](#), in accordance with the law of Moses (Ruth 2:1-3). While Ruth was gathering grain in the field, Boaz took notice of her and found out that she was the Moabite woman who returned with Naomi after her husband had died (Ruth 2:4-7). Boaz then spoke with Ruth and told her that she could freely gather grain in his fields (Ruth 2:8-11); in fact, he even requested that the Lord would bless her for her deeds (2:12). Boaz's kindness overwhelmed Ruth and she was truly humbled by his goodness toward her (2:13-18). When Ruth brought Naomi all the grain she had gathered, Naomi responded with joy and told Ruth to continue gathering grain in the field of Boaz (2:19-23).

Some time later, Naomi felt like it was time for Ruth to establish a new life with a husband and a home (3:1) so Naomi told Ruth to "...take a bath and put on perfume and dress in your nicest clothes. Then go to the threshing floor, but don't let Boaz see you until he has finished eating and drinking. Be sure to notice where he lies down; then go and uncover his feet and lie down there. He will tell you what to do" (3:3-4, NLT). Ruth's actions would be understood as a marriage proposal in the customs of the ancient Near East, which was proper since Boaz would have never proposed marriage because of the age difference. Having found favor in the eyes of Boaz, Ruth followed the advice of her mother-in-law and went in to Boaz (3:5-7). Some have suggested that this custom involved sexual advances, but there is no indication that anything sexual took place. At midnight, Boaz was startled and noticed that there was a woman lying at his feet (3:8). After asking about her identity, Ruth revealed herself and asked Boaz to take her under his wing, which means that she asked him to marry her (3:9). Boaz responded to her request with joy, but he also expressed a desire to follow the proper laws in marrying a widow (3:10-11). According to Mosaic law, the closest male relative to Ruth's deceased husband could rightfully marry her. This practice is called levirate marriage and is [described in Deuteronomy 25:5-10](#). Boaz was aware that he was not the closest relative to Ruth's deceased husband so he committed to her that he would find out if the closest relative was unable or not willing to fulfill this obligation (3:12-13). If the closest relative was not willing, Boaz made a vow that he would marry her (3:13b). Ruth then lay at his feet that night, but departed early the next morning so that no one would question the morality of the situation (3:14). Before Ruth departed, Boaz sent her away with more grain for her and her mother-in-law (3:15). When Ruth finally returned home, she told Naomi all that had taken place and she said to Ruth, "Just be patient, my daughter, until we hear what happens. The man won't rest until he has settled things today" (3:18, NLT). Naomi understood that Boaz was a man of his word and she trusted that he would keep his vow.

*Dear God, may we be people of our word.*

## **Ruth 4:1-22**

A great famine in the land of Judah forced Elimelech, Naomi, and their two sons to seek provision in Moab (Ruth 1:1-2); however, soon after they arrived Elimelech died and left Naomi alone with her sons, who eventually married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth (Ruth 1:2-4). After ten years of dwelling in Moab, tragedy struck Naomi's family once again when both of her sons died, which left her alone with her daughters-in-law (Ruth 1:5). Naomi decided to return to Judah and told Orpah and Ruth to return to their homes, but Ruth was committed to go with Naomi wherever she traveled (Ruth 1:6-22). Upon their arrival in Bethlehem, Ruth went to gather grain in the fields in order to provide for her own needs as well as the needs of Naomi (Ruth 2:1-2). While gleaning in the fields, Ruth caught the eye of the owner of the field, Boaz, and he showed her much kindness by allowing her to freely glean in the fields and eat food with his workers (Ruth 2:3-23). Some time after, Naomi felt like it was time for Ruth to establish a life on her own so she directed Ruth to find favor in the eyes of Boaz so that he would marry her (Ruth 3:1-5). Boaz gladly received Ruth and evidenced his love for her (Ruth 3:6-11), but according to the law of Moses the closest relative to Elimelech (since all of his sons were dead) had the right to marry her, so Boaz told Ruth that he would find out if that relative was able and willing to marry her (Ruth 3:12-15). Ruth reported Boaz's response back to Naomi, who told Ruth to be patient until the matter resolved itself (Ruth 3:16-18).

True to his word, Boaz went to the gate of the city and waited until this close relative came by and then Boaz asked the man to sit with him (4:1). Boaz also included ten elders of the city in this meeting so that it could be considered official business (4:2). Boaz begins the meeting by informing this relative that Naomi sold (or would be selling) a piece of land in order to provide for her needs as a widow (4:3). Mosaic law (see Leviticus 25:23-28) required that the closest relative purchase the land. This relative told Boaz that he was willing to purchase the land (4:4); however, Boaz then informed him that he would also be required to marry Ruth as a part of this redemption process (4:5). When the relative heard this, he refused his right to purchase the land and marry Ruth, which made Boaz the closest relative and gave him the right to purchase the land and marry Ruth (4:6). The relative's decision was made in the hearing of the elders and they confirmed that Boaz could rightfully purchase the land and marry Ruth (4:7-12).

After the elders confirmed this decision, Boaz married Ruth and a son was born to them (4:13). The women of the city were overcome with joy for Naomi, who had experienced much trial in her life through the death of her husband and two sons. The Lord had blessed her with a grandchild who brought back happiness into her life (4:14-16). The son of Boaz and Ruth was called Obed, who became the father of Jesse, who then became the father of David (4:17-22). Although Naomi and Ruth suffered disappointment throughout their lives, God had restored their joy and breathed life into them once again.

*Dear God, thank You for redeeming me and giving me new life through Your Son, Jesus. He is my Redeemer and the Restorer of my life.*