



THE BOOK OF RUTH

Mike Glover



INTRODUCTION

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THE AUTHOR

According to the Talmud, the prophet Samuel wrote the book of Ruth. The book itself doesn't mention the author, but whoever wrote it was a competent narrator.

THE BOOK

It has been called the most beautiful short story ever written. The book opens in Moab, which was a pagan country east of Judah and the Dead Sea. Naomi and her husband Elimelek fled there during a famine. After Elimelek and Naomi's two sons died, she decided to return to Israel. The rest of the book takes place in Bethlehem, the future birthplace of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

THEME

Faithfulness is one of the main themes of this book. We see Ruth's faithfulness to Naomi, Boaz's faithfulness to Ruth, and everyone's faithfulness to God. God, in return, rewards them with great blessings. All their faithfulness led to kindness toward each other. Kindness is an outpouring of love, and we see that everyone in this book showed the type of selfless love toward others that God expects from his followers.

We also see Ruth as a hardworking, morally pure woman, Boaz treated her with respect while fulfilling his lawful responsibility. We also see obedience to God and His laws within the book. Ruth took care of Naomi, Naomi took care of Ruth, and then Boaz took care of both women.

Finally, God took care of all of them, blessing Ruth, and Boaz with a child they named Obed, who became the grandfather of David. From David's line came Jesus of Nazareth, Saviour of the world. And finally, redemption is an underlying theme in the book of Ruth. As Boaz, the 'kinsman-redeemer,' saves Ruth and Naomi from a hopeless situation, he illustrates how Jesus Christ redeems our lives.

OUTLINE

Naomi loses her family, her husband, and two sons. Ruth 1:1-5
Naomi and Ruth return to Bethlehem. Ruth 1:6-22

Ruth meets Boaz. Ruth 2:1-3:18
Boaz redeems Ruth. Ruth 4:1-12
The lineage of David is established through Ruth and Boaz's son, Obed. Ruth 4:13-22

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This is the story of a woman who wasn't a Jew but a Moabite woman who would play a significant part in the ancestry of King David and Jesus. We're reminded that another Gentile, Rahab the harlot, also played a part in the lineage of David and Jesus.

NAOMI LOSES HER HUSBAND AND SONS

'In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. So, a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. The man's name was Elimelek, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.' Ruth 1:1-2

The setting for this book is ‘in the days when the judges ruled,’ [Ruth 1:1](#) / [Judges 18:1](#) / [Judges 17:6](#). When we think of the period of the Judges we think of a turbulent period in which there was apostasy, oppression from other nations, intertribal jealousy, and civil war. By contrast, it would seem this was a period of time in which there was peace throughout the land. This story focuses on the providence of God as He deals with a family that has faced tragedy. It can also be called a love story.

Constable, in his commentary, says the following, concerning the famine, [Ruth 1:1](#).

‘God had promised the Israelites that if they departed from Him He would discipline them by sending famine on the Promised Land, [Deuteronomy 28:17](#) / [Deuteronomy 28:23](#) / [Deuteronomy 28:38-40](#) / [Deuteronomy 28:42](#).’

Rainfall in Palestine was never plentiful and frequently it was insufficient to provide adequately for the crops. Several famines are mentioned in the Bible. Famines took place during the lifetimes of Abraham, David, and Elijah and the early years of the church in Jerusalem.

Because of ‘a famine in the land’ a man by the name of Elimelek, whose name means, ‘God is king,’ and his wife Naomi and their two sons Mahlon and Kilion left their home in Bethlehem and moved to the land of Moab, [Ruth 1:1-2](#) / [Ruth 1:22](#) / [Ruth 4:3](#). Moab got its name from Moab a son of Lot, the evil fruit of the incestuous relation of Lot with one of his daughters, [Genesis 19:36-37](#).

We remember the story of how the king of Moab, Balak, hired Balaam to curse Israel, during their pilgrimage to Canaan after wandering in the desert for forty years, [Numbers 22:1-8](#). By contrast, David when fleeing from Saul, found a friend in the king of Moab, [1 Samuel 22:3-4](#). It would seem that the two nations were in friendly relations.

The name Mahlon means ‘sickly’, and the name ‘Kilion’ means ‘wasting away’. Both names identify the death of these two sons of Elimelech and Naomi while they were in Moab. They were Ephrathites, that is, from Ephrathah which was close to Bethlehem, [Genesis 35:19](#) / [Genesis 48:7](#) / [Ruth 4:11](#) / [1 Chronicles 4:4](#) / [Micah 5:2](#), and the place where Rachel gave birth to Benjamin, [Genesis 35:16-19](#). Both Orpah and Ruth were Gentile Moabites.

‘Now Elimelek, Naomi’s husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.’ [Ruth 1:3-5](#)

Seemingly not long after their arrival in Moab Naomi’s husband Elimelek died, she was left with her two sons, [Ruth 1:3](#). The two sons married Moabite women one named Orpah and the other Ruth, [Ruth 1:4](#). Both Orpah and Ruth were Gentile Moabites. There is no specific condemnation of these marriages, although they would surely have been frowned upon by the orthodox in Israel.

Barnes, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Marriages of Israelites with women of Ammon or Moab are nowhere in the Law expressly forbidden, as were marriages with the women of Canaan, [Deuteronomy 7:1-3](#). In the days of Nehemiah the special law, [Deuteronomy 23:3-6](#), was interpreted as forbidding them, and as excluding the children of such marriages from the congregation of Israel [Nehemiah 13:1-3](#). Probably the marriages of Mahlon and Kilion would be justified by necessity, living as they were in a foreign land. Ruth was the wife of the older brother, Mahlon, [Ruth 4:10](#).’

After they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and so, Naomi was left without her two sons Mahlon and Kilion and her husband Elimelek, [Ruth 1:4-5](#). Some Jewish writers venture to say that death was punishment sent upon this family for moving to Moab and marrying Moabite women. However, it’s interesting to note that another Gentile woman, Rahab, preceded Ruth in the lineage of David and Jesus and no punishment resulted that we know of, [Matthew 1:5](#).

NAOMI AND RUTH RETURN TO BETHLEHEM

‘When Naomi heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. With her two daughters-in-law, she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.’ Ruth 1:6-7

Hearing that the famine no longer existed in Bethlehem and that God was blessing His people and their crops were now yielding them food and bread, Naomi, having family ties there, prepares to return to her home, [Ruth 1:6](#).

Her two daughters-in-law Orpah and Ruth accompany her at the beginning of her journey, [Ruth 1:7](#). This indicates they were very much attached to Naomi even to the point they were willing to leave their own country and go to Bethlehem. This speaks much about the character of Naomi.

‘Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, ‘Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home. May the LORD show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me. May the LORD grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband. Then she kissed them goodbye, and they wept aloud.’ Ruth 1:8-9

Naomi evidently thought it wouldn’t be wise for the girls to leave Moab, their native land, [Ruth 1:8](#). So, she commended them for their loyalty to their dead husbands and herself but urged them to return to their families, [Ruth 1:8](#).

She knew these young women would want to remarry so she and prayed that God would grant them days of prosperity and blessing in their second marriage, [Ruth 1:9](#). She kisses them and the very thought of their being separated from Naomi brought forth weeping, [Ruth 1:9](#).

Dummelow, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The young widow would naturally return to her mother’s house, for she would live in the women’s part of the house or tent, [Genesis 24:28](#) / [Genesis 24:67](#) / [Judges 4:17](#) / [Song of Solomon 3:4](#). The belief of that age was that men would receive in this life an exact recompense for their good and evil actions, [Psalms 18:24](#) / [Psalms 18:26](#). These two good women were to find rest after the troubles and disappointments of their Hebrew marriages.’

‘And said to her, ‘We will go back with you to your people.’ But Naomi said, ‘Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons—would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD’s hand has turned against me!’ At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.’ Ruth 1:10-14

While the daughters-in-law were intent on leaving their own land to go with her to Bethlehem, [Ruth 1:10](#), Naomi objects and urges them to return home and asks, why would they go with her? [Ruth 1:11](#). Naomi asks them is she going to have any more sons, who could become their husbands? [Ruth 1:11](#).

According to levirate marriage, the next brother or kinsman was expected to marry the childless widow of a deceased brother. The first child of the second marriage carried on the family name and inherited the property of the deceased first husband, [Deuteronomy 25:5-10](#).

Once again Naomi urges Orpah and Ruth to return home because she is too old to have another husband, [Ruth 1:12](#).

Even if she could have children, would they be willing to wait until they were old enough to marry them? [Ruth 1:12-13](#) / [Genesis 38:11](#). Naomi is simply saying that she couldn’t hope to be the mother of sons who could later marry the two Moabite widows. Naomi asks them if they would remain unmarried for them? And then tells them it is more bitter for her than for them because the LORD’s hand has turned against her, [Ruth 1:13](#).

Barnes, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The Levirate law probably existed among the Moabites, and in Israel extended beyond the brother in the strict sense, and applied to the nearest relations, since Boaz was only the kinsman of Elimelech, Ruth 3:12.’

After more weeping Orpha kisses her mother-in-law and turns back to Moab, Ruth 1:14. However, Ruth wouldn’t be dissuaded, she clings to Naomi, Ruth 1:14. She is determined to remain with Naomi regardless of the consequences of not finding a husband since she was a Moabite, Matthew 15:22-28.

‘Look,’ said Naomi, ‘your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.’ But Ruth replied, ‘Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.’ When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.’ Ruth 1:15-18

This next section of the book is esteemed as one of the most touching passages in all of literature. With the departure of Orpha who has gone back to her people and her gods, Numbers 21:29 / 1 Kings 11:7, Naomi admonishes Ruth to return also, Ruth 1:15. Ruth’s response was please do not deny me from following after you, Ruth 1:16. She says, ‘Wherever you go, I will go.’ There are cultural overtones in her words, ‘and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people,’ Ruth 1:16.

This was Ruth’s commitment to change culturally in order to identify with the people of Naomi, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. Ruth renounces all that she could be expected to hold dear in Moab and voluntarily chooses to go to Judah and begin an entirely new life with her mother-in-law among a different race of people.

Her choice has strong religious implications as we see from her words, ‘Your God (shall be) my God,’ Ruth 1:16. Had Ruth already been convicted and converted to the one God of Israel by the faith of her mother-in-law and husband? While in Moab Ruth may have retained some allegiance to Chemosh, the god of the Moabites, Numbers 21:29. However, she’s willing to truly convert to the God of Israel. She was willing to relinquish her past in order to remain committed to her mother-in-law, Naomi, and the future.

In going to Judah, she would now worship the one God of Israel. We think it is a testimony to both her deceased husband and her mother-in-law that she was willing to entrust herself to the God whom they worshipped. She is also willing to die and be buried in Judah, Ruth 1:17.

Her words, ‘May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely if even death separates you and me’, Ruth 1:17, is a solemn vow that can be paraphrased, ‘May a severe judgment fall on me if I am not true to my vow.’ Ruth’s words expressed a love and loyalty that is rare and one that Naomi could not reject so she no longer gave up on urging her to return to Moab.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following concerning the vow, Ruth 1:17.

‘The form of this ancient oath is found only in the books of Samuel and Kings, 1 Samuel 14:44 / 1 Samuel 20:13 / 1 Kings 19:2 / 1 Kings 20:10. The great significance of it is that Ruth does not say ‘Elohim’, that is God, as foreigners do, but ‘Yahweh’, that is Jehovah, indicating that Ruth is the follower of the true God.’

When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging Ruth to leave, Ruth 1:18. She basically clung on to her, 2 Kings 2:2-6.

‘So, the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?” Don’t call me Naomi,’ she told them. ‘Call me Mara because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.’ Ruth 1:19-21

The two now finish the journey to Bethlehem and their arrival in the city caused quite a stir as the people seem surprised. They ask, ‘Is this Naomi?’ [Ruth 1:19](#). Years earlier Naomi and Elimelek had left with their happy family, [Ruth 1:1-2](#), now Naomi returns without her husband and sons.

No doubt her looks have changed, certainly, she would look older now. Perhaps her very appearance bore testimony to the hardships and sorrow she had experienced while away in Moab. She tells the women of Bethlehem, not to call her Naomi, but Mara instead because the Almighty has made her life very bitter, [Ruth 1:20](#). The name Naomi means, ‘pleasant’, whereas Mara means ‘bitter’, [Exodus 15:22-27](#).

In effect, Naomi is saying that the experiences in Moab had brought great grief into her life, and she could no longer wear a name which meant pleasant. Rather they should call her by a name that meant bitterness. She tells the women she went away full, but the LORD has brought her back empty, [Ruth 1:21](#). She asks what’s the point in calling her Naomi? And says because God has afflicted her, [Ruth 1:21](#). The KJV says, God has testified against me’.

Barnes in his commentary, says the following about God testifying against her, [Ruth 1:21](#).

‘The phrase is very commonly applied to a man who gives witness concerning (usually against) another in a court of justice, [Exodus 20:16](#) / [2 Samuel 1:16](#) / [Isaiah 3:9](#). Naomi in the bitterness of her spirit complains that the Lord Himself turned against her and was bringing her sins up for judgment.’

She also says the Almighty has brought misfortune upon her, [Ruth 1:21](#). The KJV says, ‘The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.’ It would seem Naomi recognized that the tragedies of her life weren’t all accidental, [Ecclesiastes 9:11](#), but that the hand of God had been involved in the life of her family, [Ruth 1:1-5](#).

Instead of complaining to the Lord about her misfortunes in Moab, Naomi believed that it was the Lord’s discipline which caused her affliction, [Hebrews 12:7-11](#). God is the Almighty and we may not understand why He allows tragedy to come into our lives at times.

He is the sovereign God who can make all things work together for the good of his children, [Romans 8:28](#). While her life in Moab had ended in bitterness yet the end of her story in Bethlehem will be good and would eventually result in great things.

‘So, Naomi returned, accompanied by her Moabite daughter-in-law Ruth, who came back with her from the region of Moab. (Now they arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.)’ [Ruth 1:22](#)

The famine was over, and the land was producing again, Ruth and Naomi arrive at the beginning of the barley harvest, [Ruth 1:22](#), around the end of April, which was a good time to return to Bethlehem.

This chapter started with a famine, [Ruth 1:1](#), and ends with a harvest, [Ruth 1:22](#). The Moabite experience had proven tragic, but the fields of Bethlehem were now full, and this will demonstrate to us how the providence of God can work to bring about good out of a bad situation.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION

‘Now Naomi had a relative on her husband’s side of the family named Boaz. He was a wealthy, prominent man from the clan of Elimelech. One day Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, ‘Let me go to the fields so I can gather grain behind whoever permits me to do so.’ Naomi replied, ‘You may go, my daughter.’ Ruth 2:1-2

RUTH MEETS BOAZ IN THE GRAIN FIELD

We’re informed that Naomi had a kinsman related to her husband Elimelech, Ruth 1:1-3, by the name of Boaz, Ruth 3:2, whose name means quickness Ruth 2:1. He is described as a man of great wealth, although this can also mean a ‘man of valour,’ Judges 11:1 / 1 Kings 7:21 / 1 Kings 11:28 / Nehemiah 11:14, and from the clan of Elimelech, Ruth 2:1.

It seems Ruth is anxious to find work in the fields since it was harvest time and no doubt they needed food. Notice her request to Naomi, ‘let me go to the fields so I can gather grain,’ Ruth 2:2. Again, we see the dedication and respect of Ruth to her mother-in-law seeking her permission first.

Ruth wants to pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes she finds favour, Ruth 2:2. According to Mosaic law, the poor were entitled to gather grain that fell from the hands of the reapers and also the corners of the fields were left so that the poor might glean the grain. This was the time for the barley harvest not corn as the AV implies, Leviticus 19:9-10 / Leviticus 23:22 / Deuteronomy 24:19-21. And so Naomi gives permission to Ruth to go, Ruth 2:2.

‘So, Ruth went and gathered grain in the fields behind the harvesters. Now she just happened to end up in the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech. Now at that very moment, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, ‘May the LORD be with you!’ They replied, ‘May the LORD bless you!’ Ruth 2:3-4

Ruth wasn’t determined to go to any particular field it just so happened she went to the field of Boaz but what appears to be an accident can be seen as the providence of God, Ruth 2:3. Boaz comes to inspect the work that is being done and obviously noted the presence of a stranger in his field. Boaz greets the workers and says, ‘May the LORD be with you!’ And they answered him, ‘May the LORD bless you!’ Ruth 2:4.

Dummelow, in his commentary, says the following.

‘These ancient forms of salutation were distinguished by politeness, heartiness, and religious feeling, Genesis 43:29 / 2 Kings 4:29 / Psalms 129:7-8. The Arabic formula now is ‘God be with you’: in Egypt, the first speaker cries ‘Peace be on you,’ and the reply comes, ‘On you be peace, and the mercy of God and His blessings,’ or simply ‘On you be peace.’ The greetings between Boaz and the gleaners is interesting and unusual and isn’t the typical kind of greetings between us as Christians today. Suppose we greeted each other today as they did, what would happen?

‘Boaz asked his servant in charge of the harvesters, ‘To whom does this young woman belong?’ The servant in charge of the harvesters replied, ‘She’s the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the region of Moab. She asked, ‘May I follow the harvesters and gather grain among the bundles?’ Since she arrived she has been working hard from this morning until now – except for sitting in the resting hut a short time.’ Ruth 2:5-7

Boaz immediately notices Ruth and asks his servant about her, Ruth 2:5. Boaz wants to know who does this young woman belong? Ruth 2:5. Ruth’s appearance and dress were no doubt different from that of the girls he usually saw gleaning behind his reapers. Perhaps being a Moabite her dress may have been different from that of the Jewish women. The reply was almost derogatory and at the same time complementary, ‘it is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab,’ Ruth 2:6. She had asked permission to gather in the field of Boaz, Ruth 2:7.

When the overseer gave her permission, she worked diligently throughout the day except for a short period of rest which would be expected of any of the workers, [Ruth 2:7](#). The KJV says ‘she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.’

Dummelow, in his commentary, says the following about this.

‘The last words of this verse are now corrupt: the original statement was ‘she has not rested at all,’ or ‘she has not been home at all’. [Ruth 3:7](#), shows that there was no building in the field to rest in.’

‘So, Boaz said to Ruth, ‘Listen carefully, my dear! Do not leave to gather grain in another field. You need not go beyond the limits of this field. You may go along beside my female workers. Take note of the field where the men are harvesting and follow behind with the female workers. I will tell the men to leave you alone. When you are thirsty, you may go to the water jars and drink some of the water the servants draw.’ [Ruth 2:8-9](#)

Notice Boaz calls her ‘my dear’, [Ruth 2:8](#). Other translations have the words, ‘my daughter’, which indicates that Boaz was much older than Ruth, [Ruth 3:10-11](#). Hearing and then observing the diligence of Ruth as she gleaned in his field and no doubt her physical appearance, she is asked by Boaz not to go to another field to glean but to remain in his own field where she could join the women who were directly behind the reapers, [Ruth 2:8-9](#). The poor were allowed to gather.

It seems that other women would follow the reapers and bind the sheaves left by the reapers as they cut the barley. In saying this there is a suggestion that he would provide for her needs. In fact, Boaz gives instructions to his workers to keep Ruth from harm from other men, [Ruth 2:9](#). Furthermore, she is instructed to drink the water provided for the workers in Boaz’s field, [Ruth 2:9](#).

‘Ruth knelt before him with her forehead to the ground and said to him, ‘Why are you so kind and so attentive to me, even though I am a foreigner?’ [Ruth 2:10](#)

Ruth was so moved by his words of kindness that in an act of humility she bowed down before him, [Genesis 33:3](#), and asked, ‘Why are you so kind and so attentive to me, even though I am a foreigner?’ [Ruth 2:10](#). Under ordinary circumstances being a foreigner, she wouldn’t have been given such a privilege as Boaz offered her. Her very question showed a spirit of humility and modesty.

‘Boaz replied to her, ‘I have been given a full report of all that you have done for your mother-in-law following the death of your husband – how you left your father and your mother, as well as your homeland, and came to live among people you did not know previously. May the LORD reward your efforts! May your acts of kindness be repaid fully by the LORD God of Israel, from whom you have sought protection!’ [Ruth 2:11-12](#)

Boaz by inquiring about Ruth no doubt learned of her faithfulness to her mother-in-law, [Ruth 2:11](#). Leaving the land of one’s nativity was considered a real sacrifice, [Ruth 1:1-18](#). Her willingness to take on a different culture, Jewish ways, indicated a complete rejection of the ways of the people of Moab and their worship of idols, [Ruth 2:11](#) / [Ruth 1:15](#). Boaz blesses Ruth and says, ‘May the LORD reward your efforts! May your acts of kindness be repaid fully by the LORD God of Israel, from whom you have sought protection! [Ruth 2:12](#). Boaz explained that he had inquired from others concerning her devotion to her mother-in-law, [Ruth 2:11](#), and the commitment she made to the God of Israel, [Ruth 2:12](#).

We must also remember that Boaz was a descendant from the marriage of Salmon and Rahab, [Matthew 1:5](#) / [Luke 3:32](#). He had grown up listening to stories of his Gentile ancestor, Rahab, who had been shown mercy by Israel when they came into the land of Palestine. The faith of Rahab had been passed on to Boaz, [Hebrews 11:31](#) / [James 2:25](#).

This had to be impressive not only to Boaz but to all those who lived in Bethlehem. Also, Boaz knew he alone could not adequately repay Ruth for her faithfulness, he prayed that Ruth might be abundantly rewarded by the Lord ‘from whom

under His wings you have sought protection,’ [Ruth 2:12](#) / [Deuteronomy 32:11](#) / [Psalms 36:8](#) / [Psalms 57:2](#) / [Psalms 91:4](#) / [Luke 13:34](#). Ruth has found a place of refuge under the God of Israel, as a hen gathers her young under her wings to protect them from harm, so God protects those who come to him for safety, [Matthew 23:37](#).

Barnes, in his commentary, says the following, concerning [Ruth 2:12](#).

‘The similarity of expression here to [Genesis 15:1](#), and in [Ruth 2:11](#), to [Genesis 12:1](#), makes it probable that Boaz had the case of Abraham in his mind.’

‘She said, ‘You really are being kind to me, sir, for you have reassured and encouraged me, your servant, even though I am not one of your servants!’ [Ruth 2:13](#)

Her words, ‘for you have reassured me’, [Ruth 2:13](#), indicate she had been deeply stirred by the remarks of Boaz. She felt unworthy of his great kindness even though she was not a Jewish woman, [Ruth 2:13](#). No doubt probably because of her poverty, her Gentile nationality, and her heathen background she felt unworthy of his kindness. His kindness to Jewish women is understandable, but his kindness to her was nothing but pure grace.

‘At mealtime Boaz said to her, ‘Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar.’ When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over.’ [Ruth 2:14](#)

Boaz’s generosity extended even further by inviting her to eat with his workers at mealtime, he made it a point to see that she had plenty to eat, [Ruth 2:14](#). So, she sat beside the reapers at mealtime. He had parched grain, [Leviticus 2:1-14](#), passed to her but she kept back some of it obviously so she could take it home to her mother-in-law, [Ruth 2:18](#).

Barnes, in his commentary, says the following.

‘To dip the morsel, or sop, whether it were bread or meat, in the dish containing the vinegar, [Matthew 26:23](#) / [Mark 14:20](#) / [Exodus 25:29](#) / [Numbers 7:13](#), was, and still is, the common custom in the East.’

‘As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, ‘Let her gather among the sheaves and don’t reprimand her. Even pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don’t rebuke her.’ [Ruth 2:15-16](#)

As she is ready to resume her work in the field Boaz gives instructions to the young men, reapers, ‘let her gather among the sheaves and don’t reprimand her,’ [Ruth 2:15](#). Usually, the gleaners took only the grain that had not been found in the sheaves. However, Boaz made a special provision for Ruth, they were to let some of the grain from the bundles fall so that she might glean, [Ruth 2:16](#). One translation renders this ‘pull out some for her,’ [Ruth 2:16](#).

They were providing for her in a special way that would not have been done for the other reapers yet without her knowing it was being purposefully done for her, they weren’t to rebuke her for gleaning. Under Moses’ Law, she had a right to take all that was accidentally left behind, [Leviticus 19:9-10](#). The point seems to be that the reapers saw to it that an abundance of grain was left for her.

‘So, Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah. She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered. Ruth also brought out and gave her what she had left over after she had eaten enough.’ [Ruth 2:17-18](#)

The grain being small was beaten out by means of a stick to separate the grain from the chaff, [Judges 6:11](#) / [Isaiah 28:27](#). That evening when she had finished beating out the grain it amounted to ‘about an ephah of barley,’ [Ruth 2:17](#) / [Exodus 16:16](#). This amounted to approximately three pecks, dry measure.

When Ruth arrived back home in Bethlehem, Naomi no doubt was very surprised to see the amount of barley Ruth had brought home, [Ruth 2:18](#). Ruth also gave Naomi the parched grain she had left over after eating with Boaz’s

servants, Ruth 2:18. Everything she brought to Naomi was enough to support her and Naomi for about five days, Ruth 2:18 / Exodus 16:16. Again, we see the deep dedication she had for her mother-in-law.

‘Her mother-in-law asked her, ‘Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!’ Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. ‘The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz,’ she said.’ Ruth 2:19

Naomi seeing the large amount of grain that Ruth had brought home immediately asked, “Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!” Ruth 2:19. Ruth informs her that it was in the field of Boaz, Ruth 2:19.

Boaz was both a wealthy landowner and a close relative of Naomi. As such he could be expected to buy for the family its rightful land and also look after the helpless members of the family as was the case with Ruth and Naomi, Leviticus 25:25.

‘The LORD bless him!’ Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. ‘He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead.’ She added, ‘That man is our close relative; he is one of our guardian-redeemers.’ Ruth 2:20

Naomi breaks forth on a statement of praise for Boaz and no wonder because by caring for the widow of Mahlon, Boaz was providing for the dead as well as showing kindness to the living, Ruth 2:20. Moses’ Law saw to it that the surviving widows should be provided for by their near kin. Even though Ruth wasn’t of the tribe of Judah nor a Jew, yet the act of Boaz was fulfilling the requirement of the law to provide for a widow, Deuteronomy 25:5-7.

Boaz was a kinsman, that is, a close relative, Ruth 2:20, but he wasn’t the nearest relative who would have the responsibility of redeeming a kinsmen’s land that had been sold, Ruth 3:12 / Leviticus 25:25, or the duty to avenge the death of a kinsmen, Numbers 35:19, or to marry the wife of a deceased brother, Deuteronomy 25:5-10. Boaz was the next in line to carry out such duties if no other close relative came forward. In reference to Ruth, however, there was a kinsman in this case who stood before Boaz, Ruth 3:12.

Dummelow, in his commentary, says the following.

‘If an Israelite was compelled by poverty to dispose of his property, such a kinsman could compel the purchaser to sell it back, Leviticus 25:25 / Leviticus 25:47-48, the object of the law being to preserve each family in possession of its land.’

‘Then Ruth the Moabite said, ‘He even said to me, ‘Stay with my workers until they finish harvesting all my grain.’ Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, ‘It will be good for you, my daughter, to go with the women who work for him, because in someone else’s field you might be harmed.’ So, Ruth stayed close to the women of Boaz to glean until the barley and wheat harvests were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.’ Ruth 2:21-23

Ruth continues to tell Naomi about Boaz and tells that that he invited her to stay with his workers until they finish harvesting all his grain, Ruth 2:21 / Ruth 2:8. Naomi sees this as a good omen, Ruth 1:20, it’s obvious that Boaz has shown unusual kindness to Ruth.

Therefore, Naomi’s advice to Ruth is to continue to work in his field with the other women who work for him because if she goes to another field, she may get harmed, Ruth 2:22 / Ruth 2:9. She isn’t to be hesitant to accept his generosity, she encourages her to continue not only until the end of the harvest but also the wheat harvest, Ruth 2:23. Notice that Ruth lived with Naomi, Ruth 2:23.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Boaz immediately recognized the potential danger that threatened an isolated young woman without any protection in such an environment as the harvest fields provided, and he at once moved to provide that protection’.

1. He instructed her to glean in his field and in no other field.
2. He commanded the young men among his labourers not to touch her.
3. He told her to remain near his own maidens and to do her gleaning, following them.
4. He at once gave her the right to quench her thirst at the common drinking place.
5. And he offered a special prayer for her that Jehovah would grant her a rich reward for what she had done to Naomi.
6. He then invited her to eat with the other harvest workers.
7. He took pains to give her a special portion of food, so large that she was able to take part of it to Naomi.
8. Boaz then instructed the young men harvesting his barley to aid Ruth by purposely leaving handfuls of grain.
9. And he instructed them not to hinder or embarrass her in any manner whatever.
10. Finally, they were instructed neither to rebuke nor reproach her.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION

‘One day Ruth’s mother-in-law Naomi said to her, ‘My daughter, I must find a home for you, where you will be well provided for.’ Ruth 3:1

RUTH AND BOAZ AT THE THRESHING FLOOR

Naomi now tells Ruth that she must find a home for her, where she will be well provided for, [Ruth 3:1](#). The KJV uses the word ‘rest’ while the N.K.J.V. uses the word ‘security’ in this verse. These words are equivalent to marriage. In effect, Naomi was saying, “shall I not get you a good husband, that it may be well with you’.

Dummelow, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Marriages are always arranged by the parents in Eastern lands, here, of course, the mother-in-law must intervene.’

Remember that Naomi had been praying for a husband for Ruth, [Ruth 1:8-9](#). Here we see Naomi’s care for her daughter-in-law’s present and future well-being and comfort. She didn’t want Ruth to remain a poor gleaner in the fields at harvest times, this was very commendable on Naomi’s part. She understood what it meant to be old and live a life of sorrow. She didn’t want to see Ruth who was still a young woman confined for the rest of her life to widowhood.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘It is significant that Naomi had previously prayed for a husband for Ruth, [Ruth 1:8-9](#), but here she is exerting herself to bring about the answer to her prayer.’

Hubbard, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Divine and human actions work together’ in the achievement of God’s purpose. This teaches that, ‘Believers are not to wait passively for events to happen, but they must seize the initiative when the opportunity presents itself.’

Naomi will now proceed with a plan to arrange a marriage between Ruth and Boaz. To put it mildly, she has a plan about how to get Ruth well married to Boaz. Due to Ruth living among strangers with different customs along with her modesty and humility she would never have thrust herself forward to be married to Boaz who no doubt she was very impressed with.

‘Now Boaz, with whose women you have worked, is a relative of ours. Tonight, he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor.’ Ruth 3:2

Naomi basically asks, ‘isn’t Boaz of our relative?’ Ruth 3:2. She is mindful of the levirate marriage customs which called upon the nearest unmarried kinsman to take the responsibility of marrying the widow of a deceased husband who was of near kin.

It was a custom of the Jews although never stated precisely in the Law of Moses that if an Israelite who had been married died without children, it became the duty of his brother to marry his widow so that he might establish his brother’s name in Israel by begetting a son through his sister-in-law, Deuteronomy 25:5-10 / Matthew 22:24-25 / Mark 12:19 / Luke 20:28. The child then would take the name of the deceased in order that the deceased’ name might not become extinct in Israel.

This person was looked upon as a ‘redeemer,’ Deuteronomy 25:6. Due to the near kinship of Boaz, he stood in line to be the redeemer. Naomi recognised this when she said, ‘Boaz is a relative of ours?’ Ruth 3:2. Naomi probably had noticed with great interest that Boaz seemed partial to Ruth and that Ruth had a great admiration for Boaz. She now steps forward to further this relationship.

At this point of the barley harvest, he would be winnowing that night at the threshing floor, Ruth 3:2 / Isaiah 41:14-16. Winnowing often occurred at night when the breeze would come up with enabled the grain to separate from the chaff when it was tossed into the air. It seems likely also that Boaz would spend the night there to guard the grain from any thieves who might try and take the grain to gain money.

‘Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don’t let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do. I will do whatever you say,’ Ruth answered.’ Ruth 3:3-4

The facts are clear that both Naomi and Ruth have the purest of motives in their plan. Although Ruth had been kindly treated by Boaz, he hadn’t made any suggestion concerning marriage. Naomi now plans a way by which Ruth might be able to meet Boaz alone.

First, she must wash herself and then anoint herself, then put on her best garment that would make her attractive and appealing in appearance, Ruth 3:3. Such customs haven’t changed over all the years since Ruth’s time. She is to go down to the threshing floor but not to make herself known in appearance to Boaz until he had finished eating and drinking, Ruth 3:3. This in many ways is a risky and daring act on the part of Naomi and Ruth.

She is to wait until he lies down to sleep and then go and uncover his feet and lie down at his feet, Ruth 3:4 / Exodus 4:25. Under usual circumstances this would have been interpreted as an immoral act. Certainly, Ruth is taking a risk in doing this, the integrity of both Ruth and Boaz, however, was such that Naomi felt free to suggest it.

‘So, she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do. When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. In the middle of the night something startled the man; he turned—and there was a woman lying at his feet!’ Ruth 3:5-8

Ruth seems quite willing to follow Naomi’s instructions, [Ruth 3:5-6](#), and so, she waits until he had eaten and drank and is ‘in good spirits’, [Ruth 3:7](#), due to the good harvest. He finally lies down beside the heap of grain that had been winnowed, [Ruth 3:7](#). We are told she came ‘quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down,’ [Ruth 3:7](#).

Hubbard, in his commentary, says the following.

‘By lying down at Boaz’ feet, Ruth symbolized her proposal of marriage which came a moment later in [Ruth 3:9](#).’ At the moment, Boaz isn’t aroused from sleep but around midnight he discovers that a woman lying at his feet which no doubt startled him, [Ruth 3:8](#).

‘Who are you?’ he asked. ‘I am your servant Ruth,’ she said. ‘Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family.’ Ruth 3:9

Boaz naturally was startled to discover a woman lying at his feet. ‘Who are you?’ he asked and the response was, ‘I am your servant Ruth,’ she said and so Ruth asks Boaz to spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family, [Ruth 3:9](#) / [Ezekiel 16:8](#). The KJV renders this ‘spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid.’

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following, concerning the word garment.

‘The same word in the plural is translated ‘wings’ in Boaz’ prayer, [Ruth 2:12](#), where he speaks of ‘Jehovah, under whose wings thou (Ruth) art come to take refuge.’

The custom of men placing a corner of his garment over a maiden as a token of marriage is still known among the Arabs today. Boaz evidently didn’t know that he had the right to take Ruth as his wife since she hadn’t made it known that she wanted to marry. Ruth informs him that she was willing that he alone fulfil the levirate duties toward her.

‘The LORD bless you, my daughter,’ he replied. ‘This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. And now, my daughter, don’t be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character.’ Ruth 3:10-11

His answer and reaction to Ruth indicates to some that he was much an older man in age than Ruth by using the words, ‘my daughter’, [Ruth 3:10](#). Boaz tells her that her kindness is greater than that which she showed earlier, [Ruth 3:10](#). And she is commended that she didn’t seek after a young man who would have been more attractive to her, [Ruth 3:10](#). Boaz knew that her intentions were sincere in that he had observed that she didn’t chase young men or the rich.

Some have estimated that he was eighty years old at the time and Ruth was forty years old at the time but the age difference wasn’t as much a factor as it is in our culture. He states a fact that the whole city of Bethlehem knew of her and that she was a virtuous woman, [Ruth 3:11](#), but he doesn’t consider her actions immoral.

‘Although it is true that I am a guardian-redeemer of our family, there is another who is more closely related than I. Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to do his duty as your guardian-redeemer, good; let him redeem you.

But if he is not willing, as surely as the LORD lives I will do it. Lie here until morning. So, she lay at his feet until morning but got up before anyone could be recognized; and he said, No one must know that a woman came to the threshing floor. He also said, ‘Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out.’ When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and placed the bundle on her. Then he went back to town.’ Ruth 3:12-15

It's said that Boaz was only a nephew of Elimelek, [Ruth 2:20](#), whereas it seems a brother of Ruth's deceased husband, [Ruth 1:1-3](#), was still living. Even though he was obviously eager to marry her, he recognises that the closest relative must decide whether or not he wished to marry her, [Ruth 3:12](#).

It must have been late as Boaz invites Ruth to stay the night and then he makes an oath to Ruth that he would make every effort to take her as his wife, [Ruth 3:13](#). However, if there was a closer relative who was closer in lineage to Ruth he had to consult for her hand [Ruth 3:13](#). The closer relative should have the first opportunity.

She remains to lie at his feet until early morning, early enough that no one would recognize her, and then says that no one must know that a woman came to the threshing floor, [Ruth 3:14](#). There are a few views concerning who Boaz was speaking to in this verse. Some believe that He was speaking to Ruth, some believe he was speaking to others who were present and still and others suggest that he was thinking these words to himself.

Whoever he is speaking to, Boaz realising the danger of the situation requests that no one ones that Ruth spent the night at his feet. Such a story repeated by others would grow into a story that would greatly exaggerate what had actually taken place and would have harmed the reputation of Ruth and Boaz. Before departing he asks for her shawl and measures out six ephahs of barley which she takes with her into the city under the dim light of early dawn, [Ruth 3:15](#). Barnes in his commentary says the following.

‘The particular measure here was the seah, said to be about one-third of an ephah. If that is correct, it would mean that Ruth carried two ephahs of barley to Naomi. A bushel of barley weighs 50 pounds and one- and one-half bushels, the six seahs, would have weighed about 75 pounds, quite a heavy load. The statement that Boaz laid it on her probably means that he placed it on top of her head. It is well known that women can carry great weights when properly balanced upon the head.’

Although the text suggests that ‘he’, that is Boaz, went back to town, the footnote in most Bibles has the word ‘she’, which would mean it was Ruth who went back down. It's possible that it was Ruth who went back to the town first, and then Boaz went back to the town later, [Ruth 4:1](#).

‘When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, ‘How did it go, my daughter?’ Then she told her everything Boaz had done for her and added, ‘He gave me these six measures of barley, saying, ‘Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed. Then Naomi said, ‘Wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens. For the man will not rest until the matter is settled today.’ Ruth 3:16-18

When Ruth returned to Naomi, Naomi asked how did things go with Boaz, [Ruth 3:16](#). The KJV, has a slightly different slant on his verse. The fact that it was very early in the morning is brought out by the fact that Naomi wasn't sure who she was at first as she asks, ‘Is that you, my daughter?’ KJV.

No doubt with much excitement Ruth rehearses what had happened between her and Boaz, [Ruth 3:16-17](#). Furthermore, he didn't want her to return to her mother-in-law without some barley grain, [Ruth 3:17](#). Naomi gives some encouraging advice to Ruth.

Boaz is definitely interested in marrying Ruth and being an honourable man, he wouldn't rest until he followed the proper procedures to determine if he would be eligible to marry Ruth, [Ruth 3:18](#). In the meantime, Ruth must wait, she must be patient.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION

‘Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat down there just as the guardian-redeemer he had mentioned came along. Boaz said, ‘Come over here, my friend, and sit down.’ So, he went over and sat down. Boaz took ten of the elders of the town and said, ‘Sit here,’ and they did so. Then he said to the guardian-redeemer, ‘Naomi, who has come back from Moab, is selling the piece of land that belonged to our relative Elimelek. I thought I should bring the matter to your attention and suggest that you buy it in the presence of these seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, do so. But if you will not, tell me, so I will know. For no one has the right to do it except you, and I am next in line.’ ‘I will redeem it,’ he said. Then Boaz said, ‘On the day you buy the land from Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the dead man’s widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property.’ At this, the guardian-redeemer said, ‘Then I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it.’ Ruth 4:1-6

BOAZ MARRIES RUTH

Decisions, judgments, and administration in Israel took place at the gates of the cities, Judges 19:15 / Genesis 34:20 / Deuteronomy 16:18, and this is where people went to consult with the elders, Deuteronomy 19:12 / Judges 8:14. Boaz goes up to the town gate and sits down just as the guardian-redeemer he had mentioned came along and so Boaz invites him to sit with him, and he did so, Ruth 4:1. He also invites ten elders of town, Exodus 18:25, to sit down too, and they did so, Ruth 4:2.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘The fact that those thus bidden promptly obeyed Boaz is an indication of his power and influence in the city, due no doubt to his age, wealth, and reputation in Bethlehem. There may not be anything very special about the number 10, although it was understood to be a perfect number, and was the minimum number (quorum) of resident Jews in a city during later times that was required for the erection of a synagogue. It might also have been the usual number required to witness any important transaction.’

Boaz was somewhat crafty in his approach to gain the right to marry Ruth as he first informed the guardian-redeemer that there was a field of land that he had the right to buy, Ruth 4:3-4 / Leviticus 25:25-28.

After hearing of the land, the guardian-redeemer agreed to buy the land, Ruth 4:4, but then, Boaz said that there were obligations that came with claiming the land. When informed that Ruth came with the land, Ruth 4:5, the guardian kinsman decided that he wouldn’t buy the land just in case he endangered his own inheritance, Ruth 4:6.

The land would eventually go to the sons of Ruth, and not to the heirs of the guardian-redeemer. His investment would be lost once the possible sons of Ruth assumed the rights of inheritance and so, the guardian-redeemer would then have to relinquish his right to both the land and Ruth.

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following, concerning the guardian-redeemer’s words, ‘I cannot do it’, Ruth 4:6. ‘These words mean, simply, ‘I cannot afford it.’ There are two reasons that entered into this refusal. 1. The increased financial burden inherent in rearing another family, and 2. The stigma that popular prejudice fastened upon marriage to a foreigner, especially a Moabite.’

‘(Now in earlier times in Israel, for the redemption and transfer of property to become final, one party took off his sandal and gave it to the other. This was the method of legalizing transactions in Israel.) So, the guardian-redeemer said to

Boaz, 'Buy it yourself.' And he removed his sandal. Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, 'Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelek, Kilion and Mahlon. I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from his hometown. Today you are witnesses!' Then the elders and all the people at the gate said, 'We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the family of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. Through the offspring the LORD gives you by this young woman, may your family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah.' Ruth 4:7-12

Because the readers of this book had to be informed concerning this custom indicates that the events that transpired here took place many years before the writing of the book, Ruth 4:7.

Henry, in his commentary, says the following.

'Here the drawing off of the shoe was no disgrace but the confirmation of the surrender (or transfer) of the right of redemption.'

The guardian-redeemer tells Boaz to buy it himself and notice he removed his sandal, Ruth 4:8. When the shoe, or sandal was given to Boaz by the guardian-redeemer in the presence of witnesses, Ruth 4:9-10, the land transaction was sealed. Boaz not only had a right to redeem the land, but also the right to take Ruth as a wife, Ruth 4:10.

Morris, in his commentary, says the following.

'This magnanimous and unselfish action on the part of Boaz tells us something about God: 1. God must feel at least as compassionate toward all the Ruths of Moab and Babylon and of every other land as His creature Boaz felt towards Ruth, and 2. God must actually be a God of redemption, with the desire and the power to redeem all outcasts into fellowship with Himself.'

The elders and all the people agree that they are witnesses and bless Boaz in a prayer. They ask God to make Ruth who is coming into his home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the family of Israel, Ruth 4:11. They asks God that Boaz have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem, Ruth 4:11.

Since Boaz and Ruth were the forefathers of David, and in the lineage of the Messiah, what is stated here certainly came to pass. In reference to the Messiah, His birthplace in Bethlehem brought fame to this insignificant village of Palestine, as well as to the family of Boaz and Ruth, Micah 5:2.

They continue and says through the offspring God gives him by this young woman, may his family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, Ruth 4:12 / Genesis 38:29-30 / 1 Chronicles 2:4 / Matthew 1:3 / Matthew 1:5. Judah was the family through which came the existence of the village of Bethlehem, Genesis 38:29.

NAOMI GAINS A SON

'So, Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. The women said to Naomi: 'Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.' Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. The women living there said, 'Naomi has a son!' And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.' Ruth 4:13-17

Boaz and Ruth now get married, and with God's help they have a son, Ruth 4:13. The women now praise God for not leaving Naomi without a guardian-redeemer and ask that he becomes famous throughout Israel, Ruth 4:14. He will

renew her life and sustain her in her old age because Ruth, who loves her and who is better to her than seven sons, has given him birth, [Ruth 4:15](#).

Coffman, in his commentary, says the following.

‘Until the birth of this grandson, the prospect of an old age for Naomi in those times and environment was bleak and threatening indeed, but the birth of Ruth’s child had changed all that dramatically.’

Naomi takes the child in her arms and cared for him, [Ruth 4:16](#), and the women living there announce that Naomi has a son and they named him Obed, [Ruth 4:17](#). He was the father of Jesse, the father of David, [Ruth 4:17](#). The birth of Obed was the guarantee that the family of Naomi would continue and in Bible times the children took care of the aged parents.

THE GENEALOGY OF DAVID

‘This, then, is the family line of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, Boaz the father of Obed, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David.’ [Ruth 4:18-22](#)

This brief genealogy reveals the purpose of the writing of the book. Perez was the father of Hezron, [Ruth 4:14](#) / [Matthew 1:3](#). Perez was the son of Judah by Tamar, [Genesis 38:29-30](#) / [1 Chronicles 2:4](#), and David came from the lineage of Perez.

Hezron the father of Ram, [Ruth 4:19](#). Ram the father of Amminadab, [Ruth 4:19](#) / [1 Chronicles 2:10](#) / [Matthew 1:4](#). Amminadab the father of Nahshon, [Ruth 4:20](#) / [Matthew 1:4](#).

It’s stated here that ‘Nahshon was the father Salmon’, [Ruth 4:20](#) / [Matthew 1:4](#), covering a period of more than two-hundred and fifty years, the time between the death of Moses, [Deuteronomy 34:1-12](#), and the time of Gideon, [Judges 6-8](#). This is too great a time for only two generations.

Salmon the father of Boaz, [Ruth 4:21](#) / [Matthew 1:5](#). In the genealogy of the Messiah, the wife of Salmon was Rahab, [Matthew 1:6](#) / [Luke 3:32](#) / [James 2:25](#). But as the genealogy is here stated, Boaz wasn’t the immediate son of Salmon and Rahab, though they were in the genealogy of Boaz.

Barnes, in his commentary, says the following.

‘It is possible that the circumstance that the mother of Boaz was a Canaanite may have made him less indisposed to marry Ruth the Moabitess.’

Boaz the father of Obed, [Ruth 4:21](#) / [Ruth 4:13-17](#) / [Matthew 1:5](#). Obed the father of Jesse, [Ruth 4:22](#) / [1 Chronicles 2:12](#) / [Matthew 1:5](#) / [Luke 3:32](#). Jesse the father of David, [Ruth 4:22](#) / [1 Samuel 17:12-58](#) / [Matthew 1:6](#).

Though the ones who first received the book didn’t know the reason for this brief genealogy, we today understand it because of the mention of David, [Ruth 4:22](#), through whom God promised that the Messiah was to be born into the world, [Matthew 1:5](#) / [Matthew 1:16](#) / [Luke 3:23](#) / [Luke 3:32](#).

In the genealogy that is here in Ruth, we must assume the customary recording of Jewish genealogies wherein only the main personalities of the genealogies were included while some generations were left out.

CONCLUSION

What a wonderful love story this book has revealed to us. Faithfulness, godliness, selflessness, and a desire to do what is right to everyone around but foremost to do what is right for God's sake.

We can only be encouraged by the story to do likewise in our own lives. Let us trust God to take care of our tomorrows, even when tomorrow seems uncertain to us at times.