

Ruth

FROM LOSS TO LOVE



touchinglives™

with James Merritt

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Ruth: From Loss to Love

The book of Ruth is small, but powerful, one of only two books in God's Word named after a woman. Its truth, however, is applicable for men and women everywhere who desire to know God in His fullness.

Women, today, often identify themselves and their worth in terms of relationships; men often identify themselves and their success in terms of professional achievements and possessions. Ruth, however, pinpoints one of the foundational truths of God's Word. The only relationship that matters eternally, the only achievement in which one can glory, is the relationship one has with the Kinsman Redeemer, Jesus.

Although the story can be reduced simply to that of a young Moabite woman who marries a Jew, God's grace and sovereignty are evident as Ruth becomes an ancestor of the Messiah. An examination of Ruth demonstrates the riches and wonders of God's Word through a beautiful picture, or type, of the redemption of sinners by Jesus.

At the same time, the breathtaking insight of God's Word covers the lives of women as mothers, daughters, wives, daughters-in-law, mothers-in-law, and grandmothers. Every woman can identify with one of the women or one of the life stages of women, as found in the exciting book of Ruth. Join us in the short journey from gloom to glory, as we travel through the transformation that can only be accomplished by the grace of God.

Chapter 1

In chapter one of Ruth, a simple journey to avoid a famine takes a family directly into the path of not one funeral, but three. Naomi follows her husband Elimelech into the land of Moab, only about 50 miles from Bethlehem. It doesn't seem like such a big deal but it soon becomes apparent that there is a high cost in making small compromises. Naomi goes from pleasant to bitter in a few short verses.

Chapter 2

Following the grief found in chapter one, a Moabite daughter-in-law is moved toward seeking grace during difficult days in chapter two. The relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law begins a subtle change, as evidenced only by the grace of God. Naomi experiences hope afresh and anew.

Chapter 3

Naomi begins to function more like a mother than a mother-in-law in chapter three of Ruth. She begins to encourage, instruct, and exhort Ruth to seek help from their only hope, Boaz, as their Kinsman Redeemer. It's a beautiful picture of the Lord Jesus Christ and His desire to redeem us from our brokenness and alienation.

Chapter 4

From weeping in chapter one, this short book takes us to a wedding in chapter four. Only God can take us from tears to triumph, from emptiness to overflow, and from sadness to His security.

The Book of Ruth Study Questions

Introduction

1. When does the book of Ruth take place? (1:1)

2. What do you know about those days? (See Judges 2:7,10 - 13 and 21:25)

Chapter One

1. Why did Elimelech and his family leave Bethlehem?

2. Where did they go?

3. What can you find out about the Moabites in Genesis 19:36-37, Numbers 25:1, Deuteronomy 2:9, 1 Kings 11:1-2, and Ezra 9:1?

4. While in Moab, what happened to Naomi's family? (1:3-5)

5. Why is this such a crisis of faith for Naomi?

6. What makes Naomi decide to return to Bethlehem? (1:6)

7. Who wants to accompany Naomi back to Bethlehem? (1:7)

8. What is Naomi's response? (1:8)

9. List the reasons you believe Naomi might have responded in this way? (See Deuteronomy 25:5-6)

10. Why do you believe that Ruth clung to Naomi?

11. What do you believe that Ruth was really saying in 1:16-17?

12. What does Naomi say has happened in her life in 1:20?

What do you believe about that statement?

Application

Have you ever experienced loss or disappointment in your life?

How did you respond? How might you have hoped to respond?

Chapter Two

1. What do you find as the theme of this book in chapter two? (2:2)

2. Discuss 2:3 - in light of Jeremiah 29:11 and Ephesians 2:10?

3. Discuss the characteristics of Boaz as seen in chapter 2.

3. Where do you begin to see Naomi's attitude begin to change?

Why? _____

(For more indepth study, look in your Bible's concordance for the word "wings." (See Ruth 2:12.)

Chapter Three

1. In 3:1, what do you begin to see in the life of Naomi?

2. What instructions does Naomi give Ruth? (3:3) How could that apply to the believer?

3. Discuss 3:9. What do you believe that to mean?

4. What is the problem in the way of Boaz caring for Ruth? (3:13)

5. What is Naomi's advice to Ruth? (3:18) How does that apply to us?

Chapter Four

1. Why did Boaz have the opportunity to purchase Ruth? (4:6) How does this relate to I Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23?

2. What were the three qualifications of a “kinsman redeemer”? See Leviticus 25*47-55 and Deuteronomy 25:5-10?

3. Why did Boaz have such a heart for Ruth, a Moabite maiden? (See Matthew 1:5)

4. Who was Naomi’s grandson? Her great grandson?

What is the application for us?

Read Isaiah 43:18-19, Psalm 30:5, and Psalm 130:5-6.



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PO Box 2000
Atlanta, GA 30301

800.413.1131
www.touchinglives.org