

A person is shown from the chest up, holding a large, full bundle of dried wheat stalks. The person's face is obscured by the wheat. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The text 'MADE HIS' is overlaid in a large, dark, serif font, centered over the wheat.

# MADE HIS

A study through the Book of Ruth

# hello

The book of Ruth takes place at the time when the Judges ruled. Since the death of Joshua, God's people were on a steep decline into rebellion, idolatry, and defeat. Their continuous sequence of sin shoved a drifting Israel into full apostasy to the Lord.

But in the small town of Bethlehem, the light shown in the darkness.

Ruth is a timeless story of redemption that never grows old. Beneath the topsoil of her romantic tale lay treasures of rich application for us.

Take a stroll through the fields of Bethlehem, dig deep into the rich Scriptures, and see what the Lord has in store. The Kinsman Redeemer awaits!

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The stench of death permeated every space, crowding out laughter and hope. As Naomi shut the door to her Moab home for the final time, she prayed the heartbreak within would remain locked away inside and not follow her back.

She centered the weight of her traveling bag and stepped onto the dusty road headed toward Bethlehem. Ten years ago, she had traveled this same path with her husband and two healthy sons. Her heart, once bursting with joy, now an empty cavernous abyss.

Her husband and her sons were dead, casualties of their own consequences. Why had they rushed to leave God's land? Was the promise of full stomachs worth her ravenous soul? Why had she allowed her distrust in Jehovah to lose the battle for her obedience and faith?

The foul taste of grief, of loss, of despair, embittered her stomach. Yes, that was what she was: bitter, sullen, resentful of her very life.

What was she thinking, walking home like she was – widowed and destitute? She had no one to take care of her in her old age, no money to redeem what belonged to her late husband. Did she think she could stroll into town and pick up her life where she left it?

Better to lay down right here in the middle of the road and wait for her heart to cease beating.

"Naomi, wait for me!"

The silhouette of a slender girl drew close in her haste, the wrapped bundles bouncing behind her in rhythm with her footfalls.

"I'm coming with you," Ruth said.



wayward wanderer

## enemy territory

The Book of Ruth is one of the most beautiful stories ever written in history, and her legacy remains a powerful example of Christ's love for His church. Whether you are familiar with this story or no, Ruth will no doubt leave a lasting impression on your heart as you dig into the rich soil of the treasures hidden within this timeless classic.

As we get to know the Kinsman Redeemer, the nature of our Savior Jesus Christ will become evident, especially when romance blooms in the most unlikely place.

The definitions for the key characters and places are important and worth the time to commit them to memory.

Flip to the back page for the list of definitions and record them below.

### Definitions for the Book of Ruth

Bethlehem \_\_\_\_\_  
Judah \_\_\_\_\_  
Naomi \_\_\_\_\_  
Ruth \_\_\_\_\_  
Boaz \_\_\_\_\_  
Goel \_\_\_\_\_

Before we dive into our story, it's important that we set the scene and give ourselves some context.

#### Ruth 1:1

"In the days when the \_\_\_\_\_ ruled..."  
the story of Ruth took place during the Old Testament book of the same name  
\_\_\_\_\_

The nation of Israel had moved into the Promised Land, but not all was good in the land flowing with milk and honey. The people spun on an endless cycle of rebellion. The entire book of Judges follows the same pattern of behavior from the first page to the last.

Record each part of the sequence as outlined in Judges 2

Verse 10

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Verse 11-13

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Verse 14-15

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Verse 16

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Verse 18

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Verse 19

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And round and round they went.

Consider Judges 2:20-23. Why had the Lord allowed the enemies of Israel to oppress His people?

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To remind God's people of His sovereignty, the enemies lurking close by for discipline. One of these was the Moabites, a constant thorn in Israel's side.

What do we know about Moab? Let's go all the way back to the very first mention and work our way forward.

Moab: The Origin

Genesis 19:30-37

The Moabites were the product of \_\_\_\_\_  
incestuous relationship with his oldest daughter \_\_\_\_\_

Regardless of how sinful and disturbing their origin may be, the Moabites came from Abraham's nephew. Therefore, they were of strong relation to the nation of Israel. That fact, as we shall see, will hold the Moabites to a higher standard than your typical run-of-the-mill Canaanite.

## Moab: The Religion

1 Kings 11:7

\_\_\_\_\_ was the greatest of their gods.

Chemosh was a god who demanded human sacrifice in much of the same way Molech did. Mother's would lay their children on the fiery, brazen arms as a burnt sacrifice in their worship rituals.

## Moab: The Historical

Numbers 22:1-6

\_\_\_\_\_ King of Moab sent messengers to \_\_\_\_\_  
and asked him to curse the nation of Israel.

You may remember this story of the infamous Prophet and his talking donkey. The King of Moab hired Balaam to curse the nation of Israel, but only blessings came when he opened his mouth. (Numbers 22-24)

## Moab: The Contemporary

Judges 3:12-30

The Lord strengthened \_\_\_\_\_ King of Moab  
When the people cried to the Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ the deliverer was sent.  
Moab was subdued and the land had \_\_\_\_\_ for eighty years

The book of Ruth takes place during this time, the time when the Lord elected judges to bring deliverance from oppression from the enemy. Amid rebellious sin and its resulting hardship, Ruth is a beacon of light that shines from the fields of Judah, in a small village called Bethlehem.

This brings us to our study. However, our story does not begin with our hero or the damsel in distress. It does not start in Bethlehem or anywhere within the borders of Judah at all. It starts in the foreign, pagan, degraded land of the territory of this same Moab.

### Ruth 1:1-5

In the days when the \_\_\_\_\_ ruled there was a \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ and a man of Bethlehem in \_\_\_\_\_ went to sojourn in the country of \_\_\_\_\_.

What had overtaken the land of Judah? \_\_\_\_\_

Life in the Land of Promise became uncomfortable because of the Lord's hand of discipline. Crops withered, business suffered, and this Judean family thirst in the drought.

Bethlehem means \_\_\_\_\_

In a place that boasted of sustenance, they were starving. They were feeling the pinch. Instead of submitting to the Lord's discipline, they started looking around for the escape hatch.

### They faced two choices

Physical poverty in the land of the Living God,  
or Spiritual poverty in the land of carnality

Where did they move to? \_\_\_\_\_

How long did they live in Moab? \_\_\_\_\_

We find this family on the pages of our story in a country where they had no business being, in the very land of their enemy, among people they were commanded not to associate.

They made the fatal decision to take their chances with the enemy, instead.

There was another time when a family faced this exact crossroad on their journey. Abraham told Lot it was necessary for them to part ways and he gave Lot the choice of his desired direction.

What had Lot seen in Genesis 13:10?

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The land Lot and Abraham traveled was hot and dusty, rocky, and hard. Nothing came easily. So, when Lot lifted his eyes and saw the well-watered landscape of the valley that lay before him, he was hooked. It was a tropical Garden of Eden. Historians tell us papayas, mangos, all kinds of citrus and the tropical fruit was in great abundance. It had potential, prosperity, beauty.

It mesmerized Lot. There was only one problem. Fill in the blanks of Genesis 13:13 to reveal the spiritual state of the land:

Now the men of Sodom were \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ against the Lord.

Lot's family was destroyed in a fertile land where the Lord did not dwell.

### *Ponder This*

Moab was green and flourishing. Bethlehem was famished. Though it was enemy territory, Naomi left Judah for the hope of an easier life for her family. What had the sojourning of her disobedience taken from her according to Ruth 1:5?

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Naomi thought certain death would come in Bethlehem. The severe famine had left her empty and unsatisfied.

“Lord, you said this was the House of Bread! Why then do I feel famished?”

In time, a sobering reality hit hard. In the plains of Moab, she lost her husband, her two sons. The enemy territory had swallowed everything of actual worth.

The mirage of an easier life evaporated, and the stench of death clung to her clothes.

### *Personal Reflection*

When you feel famished and dissatisfied in the House of Praise, that’s when the enemy sweeps in, planting seeds of doubt. “The Lord is unable to provide for you here in Bethlehem. He has abandoned you. Come with me out here. Look at Sodom’s fruit and abundance.”

If you take the bait and sojourn out of Judah’s boundaries, the facade of an easier life will evaporate, and leave you stranded in a wasteland mile away from home.

Consider the following verses. How do they apply?

Psalm 27:13

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Habakkuk 3:17-19

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Even in the famine, remain in the House of Bread and Praise.  
Moab is never worth it!

## the return

### Ruth 1:6

Naomi, now widowed and childless has nothing with her except her two daughters-in-law. One of those women was Ruth.

One day, after ten years in the land of her wandering, she was done. Naomi picked herself off the ground in her decision to leave Moab. Verse 6 tells us she had heard two truths about her homeland. What were they?

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“The Lord is on the move, and I am going home!”

She had no idea what, if anything, would be awaiting her back in Bethlehem, but she didn't care. All she knew was she needed to get out of Moab. And, despite Naomi's pleading, our dear Ruth, the Moabite wife of her dead son, goes with her. We will look at that more in-depth in the next lesson. For now, let's keep Naomi in the spotlight.

### Ruth 1:19-21

After an arduous and dangerous journey, Naomi and Ruth arrived safely in Bethlehem. No doubt, the arrival of Naomi after so many years away began a gossip line one hundred Jewish women long. Whispers started to rise. “Is this Naomi? No, it can't be!

Naomi responded to their welcome in a peculiar way. What was the first thing she said to them in verse 20?

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What does the name Naomi mean? \_\_\_\_\_

What would she rather be called instead? \_\_\_\_\_

### Mä·rä': Bitterness

What does Naomi realize and admit in verse 21?

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Naomi was Pleasant, but the consequences of her wayward wanderings left her Bitter.

Naomi left Bethlehem in search of something better, only to realize there was nothing better than the Lord!  
The world only leaves you empty.

### *Personal Reflection*

No matter what the enemy offers, true fulfillment is found in the Lord. Have you found this to be true somewhere along your journey with the Lord?

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## *Pander This*

After their release from slavery, the children of Israel miraculously crossed the Red Sea and watched their Egyptian enemies drown. They were safe! The Lord had delivered them, and they had much cause for celebration.

But then, their tune changed...

### Exodus 15:22-25

Three days of wandering in the wilderness brought them to a spring of water. What was the spring called according to verse 23?

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Why couldn't they drink the water?

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In the desert, they searched for water, only to find the proffered cup sour. Their thirst could not be quenched, and they became bitter. Naomi reintroduced herself with this same name: Mara. She had left the world and returned to the land of her obedience but had a soured heart.

"I may be back in the land of praise, but Pleasant is not befitting. Call me Bitter instead."

What did the Lord show Moses in verse 25? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened when he threw the wood into the water?

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### The wood, the cross

Return to Calvary. Remember the Cross and the Lamb who laid down his life to redeem you. This is the cure to the bitterness. Jesus, who drank the soured cup on your behalf, will make you Pleasant once more!

The prodigal had returned.

All of Naomi's bitterness and wanderings,  
her lost identity and years of consequence,  
covered in the blood of the Passover Lamb. Forgiven!

And so it is for us. It will always be Passover for the one who returns. With Calvary front and center, the repentant heart will be restored into the open arms of Jesus.

What a beautiful beginning to our study!

A diamond sparkles more magnificent when laid upon a dark background.  
The story unfolding before us of redemption and of our Kinsman Redeemer  
will be the brilliant and beautiful contrast to Naomi's dark journey home.

And the light of His glory will illuminate the pages and He will be glorious.

