

Lesson 10B

Ruth

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Introduction

1A **Title:** The name of the book derives from one of the three principal characters, Ruth, a _____. Her name is mentioned only 12 times in the book, and only in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus. This is unusual

1B. Ruth was not an Israelite; 5x she is referred to as "Ruth the Moabitess." This is the only book in the Bible named after a _____.

2B. Ruth is not the main character of the book. The story begins with the crisis in _____ family, emphasizing Naomi's loss, emptiness, and bitterness and concludes with the declaration of her fullness and blessing in the birth of Obed. In the conclusion the writer emphasizes Naomi's blessing and virtually ignores Ruth.

55 of the 85 verses in this short story are narrative

Of the 1,294 words in the book, 678, 52.4% are dialogue.

Ruth speaks least, her speeches are the shortest. She speaks only 120 words in ten speeches,

Naomi speaks 225 words in twelve speeches and

Boaz speaks 281 words in fourteen speeches.

Based on plot, it is the Book of Naomi, based on Dialogue the book of Boaz.

2A **Date:** About the time that David becomes king. This is one of the reasons for the book is to provide background on David. He became king in Hebron in **1011 BC**.

3A **Author:** Uncertain

The Babylonian Talmud attributed this to Samuel.

Modern liberal scholarship dates it much later, during or after the Babylonian Captivity. This reflects their bias against direct revelation and prophecy.

4A **Place in the Canon**

In the English canon Ruth follows Judges.

In the Hebrew canon it is placed in the *Kethubim*, where the books articulate wisdom either in a formal way, or they are the artistic products of wisdom. *Ruth* is found in the *Kethubim* because of the literary form and skill of writer and *Ruth*. Literary tradition says this is due to Samuel, but this cannot be proved. Also, because this short-story informs us of how we can live wisely, by applying these doctrines to suffering in our own lives.

An ancient tradition connects it to Judges. The LXX places it there and includes it as another appendix to Judges, as does the English. It has marked similarity with certain things in Judges 19-21.

Ruth can be pulled together with Jud 19-21, a comparison between order and welfare in *Ruth* and chaos and destruction in *Judges*. This contrast is seen in common vocabulary and parallel events. Both take place in a culture allegedly dominated by the Bible. But this is only superficial. So some observations here give much to us about our own.

5A **Place in history**

1B It fits during the time of the *Judges* so the themes will relate to sanctification.

2B *Ruth* must be understood in the context of the blessings and cursings in the Mosaic Covenant.

Going outside the land is a picture of being out of God's plan.

Thus there is an emphasis on *chesed*, faithful, loyal, love; covenant faithfulness.

6A Theme: The theme of *Ruth* is often expressed in terms of _____. While this is an important theme, it is secondary to the theme of _____, or the continuing grace of God in the provision of a Redeemer.

The genealogies at the beginning (1:1-4) and end (4:14-22) focus on Naomi, not *Ruth*. Naomi is the main character who suffers the loss of her husband and sons and becomes bitter. At the end of the book she is the one who is blessed.

As such she is also a picture of how God will turn the cursing of Israel in the time of the Judges into the blessing of the rule of David and eventually the rule of the Messiah.

7A **Key Word**

Close relative or kinsman or redeemer (לֹאֵאָוֶן) (*Go'el*) from (לֹאֵ ; ג') (*ga'al*) to redeem. This refers to a _____ which is a picture of the redemption of Jesus Christ on the cross.

- 8A Thus the Book of Ruth is one of two books in the Old Testament addressing the problem of undeserved suffering.

Exposition of Ruth

- I. God brings disaster into Naomi's life, ch. 1
 - A. The deaths of Naomi's husband and sons 1:1–5
 - B. Naomi's inability to provide husbands for Ruth and Orpah 1:6–14
 - C. Ruth's profession of faith in Yahweh 1:15–18
 - D. Naomi's weak faith 1:19–21
 - E. Hope for the future 1:22
- II. Naomi and Ruth's plans chs. 2–3
 - A. The plan to obtain food ch. 2
 - 1. God's providential guidance of Ruth 2:1–7
 - 2. The maidservant of Boaz 2:8–13
 - 3. Ruth's privileges and responsibility 2:14–16
 - 4. Ruth's blessing of Naomi physically 2:17–23
 - B. The plan to obtain rest ch. 3
 - 1. Naomi's plan to secure rest for Ruth 3:1–5
 - 2. Ruth's encouragement and Boaz's response 3:6–13
 - 3. Ruth's return to Naomi 3:14–18
- III. God's provision of redemption and blessing for Naomi, ch. 4
 - A. The nearer kinsman's decision 4:1–6
 - B. Boaz's securing of the right to marry Ruth 4:7–12
 - C. God's provision of a son 4:13–17

D. The genealogical appendix 4:18–22