

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY: RUTH, NAOMI, + BOAZ

The story of Ruth is one of loyalty, bravery, and humility. Despite Naomi's lonely and brutal life, Ruth bravely left her home, joined her mother-in-law, and adapted to her Israelite lifestyle. Through the faithfulness of Boaz, Ruth and Naomi's family was restored. In this story of redemption, the characters dutifully trusted God and allowed Him to use unlikely people to accomplish His ultimate plan.

The events described in the book of Ruth took place during the time of Judges. Throughout the book of Judges, the nation of Israel failed repeatedly and grew further away from God. Understanding the context of the Israelites during this time allows one to see the unique kindness and faithfulness of both Ruth and Boaz.

MAIN IDEAS: RUTH'S NOBLE CHARACTER

- **Ruth showed compassion and loyalty to her mother-in-law, Naomi.** (Ruth 1:16)
- **Boaz, a noble man and relative of Naomi, provided for Ruth because of her kindness.** (Ruth 2:11-13)
- **Boaz agreed to be Ruth's kinsmen redeemer, the one to restore her family and lineage.** (Ruth 3:11-13)
- **Ruth married Boaz and gave birth to a son, Obed, the grandfather of David.** (Ruth 4:22)

EXAMPLE OF GOD'S CHARACTER: LOYAL + COMPASSIONATE

After losing her husband and two sons, Naomi was left widowed and childless. Naomi told her daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, to return to their home countries without her. Orpah did as she said, but Ruth clung to Naomi and remained loyal to her.

While searching for something to eat, Ruth sought grain among the barley fields. The fields belonged to a relative of Naomi's named Boaz, who was a noble man. In Leviticus 19:9, God provided a specific law that instructed the Israelites not to gather their harvests fully, but to leave some to be gleaned by those in need. Boaz was a faithful man who diligently kept this law, which served Ruth and Naomi in their time of need.

Although God's laws may seem arbitrary, they serve a greater purpose. Just as Ruth was compassionate and loyal to Naomi, God is loyal and faithful to those who follow Him. The faithfulness of Boaz displays the compassion and character of God.



JESUS IN RUTH: THE REDEEMER OF GOD'S FAMILY

Starting with the family of Abraham, God chose the Israelites as His people and established them as a nation. God led the Jewish people into the Promised Land and established the temple. The Israelites intended to remain faithful, but they ultimately strayed from God.. God promised to send a future leader of Israel to redeem and restore the Israelites after the exile and destruction of the temple. Similar to how Boaz redeemed Ruth and Naomi's family, Jesus restored God's chosen family.

The lineage of Ruth and Boaz is recorded in Ruth 4, beginning with their son, Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse, who was the father of David. Rahab, the prostitute who protected Caleb and Joshua in Joshua 2, was the mother of Boaz. In this story, God used unlikely people (including prostitutes, widows, and outsiders) to redeem Ruth's family and form the lineage of Jesus! God used the Israelites to establish the nation which brought forth Jesus, who invited all believers into God's chosen family.

Although he was an Israelite Himself, Jesus came to redeem all people who follow Him. In Jesus, there are no divisions by ethnicity or heritage; there are only children of God who have been forgiven and redeemed (Galatians 3:28)!