

The book of RUTH

WEEK 1 (9/29-10/5) RUTH 1:1-18

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of Ruth.

Read Ruth 1:1-18 aloud.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Context is important for understanding an Old Testament narrative. Look back in your Bible, and read Judges 21:25, and then read Ruth 1:1 again. What do we learn about the spiritual state of Israel during this time?
2. What has happened in Ruth 1:1-5? Who are the characters?
3. What reasons does Naomi give to her daughters-in-law for not remaining with her in verses 6 to 18?
4. How is God showing kindness and love to Naomi through Ruth in verses 15 to 18, even when Naomi thinks the opposite of God?
5. In the midst of terrible circumstances, it is easy to lose perspective and stop trusting God. Have you ever been in a situation when God felt distant? Please explain.

PRAYER GUIDE:

Ask your group to share a prayer request in one of these two areas:

1. That a friend or family member who is far from the Lord would return to him.
2. That you would return to the Lord from a specific area of unfaithfulness in your life.



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WEEK 2 (10/6-10/12)

RUTH 1:19-22

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of Ruth.

Read Ruth 1:19-22 aloud.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Recap what has happened in Ruth 1:1-18? Who are the characters?
2. In verses 19 to 22, Naomi changes her name. Using the footnotes in your Bible (or another resource), what are the meanings of her two names? Why does Naomi change her name?
3. The theme of "returning" is very prominent in Ruth 1. Go through this chapter and list every occurrence of the word "return" or a similar word. How do the usages of "return" shape what this chapter is about?
4. What is Naomi's attitude in the midst of tragedy and loss? Who does she blame for all her hardships?

PRAYER GUIDE:

Ask your group to share a prayer request about a current loss that they are feeling. Spend time praying for each group member, and try to embody how Ruth loved and cared for Naomi in her tragedy.



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Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of Ruth.

Read Ruth 2:1-16 aloud.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. One of the main themes of Ruth 2 is God's providence and provision. List all the instances in this chapter where we see God's provision for Naomi and Ruth.
2. Boaz is described as a "worthy man" (v. 1). What are some ways in which his character is shown in this passage?
3. God's law required landowners like Boaz to provide for the poor by leaving behind some of their crops during the harvest time. What are some ways in which Boaz goes beyond the minimum requirement of the law and seeks to honor God in his actions?
4. How has God used others to provide for your needs? How has he used you to provide for someone else's needs?
5. What are some needs that you have now? What is God teaching you about faith as you trust him to provide?

PRAYER GUIDE:

As you pray with your group, use the acrostic "ACTS" to structure your time:

- Adoration: Praise God for being the provider and sustainer of all things.
- Confession: Confess to God areas where you struggle to trust him to provide.
- Thanksgiving: Thank God for the providence that he has shown to you.
- Supplication: Ask God for his continued providence, ask him to provide in any areas of need, and ask him to show you how he wants you to provide for others.



BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of Ruth.

Read Ruth 2:17-23 aloud.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Describe Boaz's treatment of Ruth. Why did he act so favorably toward her?
2. In verse 20, Naomi identifies Boaz as "a close relative ... one of our redeemers." Why is this important to Naomi?
3. How does this idea of "redeemers" foreshadow Jesus Christ?
4. Where do you struggle to trust God with your needs? This could be physical, spiritual, or emotional.
5. In what areas of your life do you struggle to honor God versus doing the minimum standard expected? How can you improve in these areas?

PRAYER GUIDE:

Pray in the same way as you did last week. Use the acrostic "ACTS" to structure your time:

- Adoration: Praise God for being the provider and sustainer of all things.
- Confession: Confess to God areas where you struggle to trust him to provide.
- Thanksgiving: Thank God for the providence that he has shown to you.
- Supplication: Ask God for his continued providence, ask him to provide in any areas of need, and ask him to show you how he wants you to provide for others.



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Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of Ruth.

Read Ruth 3:1-18 aloud.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What is your first impression of what is happening in Ruth 3? What surprises you about this narrative?
2. Compare Naomi's instructions with what Ruth actually says to Boaz. What clues in the text give us insight into what Ruth meant in her conversation with Boaz?
3. How does Boaz demonstrate ultimate trust in God by consulting the closer kinsman-redeemer before moving forward in relationship with Ruth?
4. People often wonder how much they should do to make something happen and how much they should let God do. How does Ruth 3 give us insight into answering this question?
5. Making plans is part of daily living. How can you apply what you've learned in Ruth 3 to your planning this week?
6. We are all called to obey and trust God. This week specifically, what areas of your life do you need to act in obedience or wait in trust to God?

PRAYER GUIDE:

Ruth 3 puts Naomi's audacious faith on display. Have your group break into groups of 3 or 4 and each person share one specific way he or she wants to trust God's provision. Then, pray for each other in the smaller groups.



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WEEK 6 (11/3-11/9)
RUTH 4:1-12

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of Ruth.

Read Ruth 4:1-12 aloud.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Recount the events of Ruth 1 to 3 thus far. Make sure to include the ways you have seen God orchestrate protection and provision throughout the narrative.
2. In verses 1 to 6, we see the conversation between Boaz and the other redeemer. What reasons does the other redeemer give for not wanting to redeem Naomi and her family? How are his reasons for not redeeming Naomi's family in contrast to Boaz's willingness to redeem her?
3. Describe what is said by the townspeople about Ruth in verses 11 and 12. What do these things mean, and why are they important?
4. The book of Ruth is a wonderful story of God's faithfulness. Where have you seen God faithfully at work in your life in the past? Where do you need to trust his faithfulness now?

PRAYER GUIDE:

Spend time praying through the answers to question 4. Thank and praise God for how you have seen him faithfully at work in your life. Honestly ask him to deepen your trust in him as you struggle to believe in his faithfulness right now.



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Pray for God to give you and your discipleship group eyes to see and ears to hear what he is saying in the book of Ruth.

Read Ruth 4:13-22 aloud.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. How did God redeem Ruth? What about Ruth makes her a surprising recipient of God's grace?
2. In what ways does the marriage between Ruth and Boaz bring restoration to Naomi?
3. Naomi, whose name means "pleasant," turns bitter because of loss in her life. At the end of the story, the bitterness is melting away. What are some ways that God has acted in your life to pull you out of bitterness and sadness?
4. The comparisons in verses 11 and 12 point back to Israel's history. The mini-genealogy in verses 18 to 22 points forward to Ruth's grandchildren. Why is this an appropriate end to the story?
5. As we wrap up this story, how would you summarize what you are taking away from Ruth as a whole?

PRAYER GUIDE:

Reflecting back on our study, use the "ACTS" structure of praying.

- Adoration: How have you grown to adore God more in this study?
- Confession: What sin do you need to confess that has been exposed during this study?
- Thanksgiving: What can you thank God for from the last four weeks?
- Supplication: Who do you need to pray for in light of this study?

