



Ruth

The New American Standard Bible (NASB) has been used to prepare this Study. When a question instructs you to use your "study tools/helps", this means to use your personal concordance, dictionary or other resource.

Introduction & Chapter 1

According to the Talmud (Jewish tradition), the well-known prophet Samuel was the author of the Book of Ruth. The Book does not directly identify Samuel as the author, but whoever did actually pen this account was clearly a gifted and skilled storyteller. The book of Ruth has been described as the most beautiful short story ever written.

The final words of this book directly link Ruth with her great-grandson, David (Ruth 4:17-22), so we know for sure it was written after his anointing. The genealogy in the last chapter of the book reveals David's lineage through the time period of the judges, acting as a support for his rightful kingship. It is interesting to note that Solomon is not mentioned, which causes some to conclude that this book was probably written before David ascended to the throne.

Looking Ahead:

As this story unfolds, we are immediately thrown into a sad and seemingly hopeless scenario. Due to famine, times are extremely tough in Bethlehem. One family in particular is being faced with a serious dilemma: 1). stay in Bethlehem or 2). venture out into what appears to be "greener pastures". The decision is a critical one with many devastating results, which we will soon discover.

As this chapter closes, Ruth is on her way back home. The trying years will definitely take a toll on her as she sadly proclaims, "I went out full, but the LORD has brought me back empty". Let's see why she finds herself in this barren condition as we dive right into this week's homework.

This week's Memory verse is **Proverbs 3:25-26**. Begin memorizing the verse(s) today. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you memorize this passage and for opportunities to apply it...

**"Do not be afraid of sudden fear nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes;
For the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught."**

Proverbs 3:25-26

Write out **Proverbs 3:25-26** _____

Write this verse(s) on your index cards... keep one with you & post the other in a prominent place.

DAY ONE

Pray then read *Ruth 1:1-2*

1. When did the events of this story take place? (v.1a) _____
A. What does Judges 2:16-17 reveal about this time period in Israel? _____

2. What characterized this time period in Bethlehem? (v.1b) _____
Define: FAMINE _____

A. Given Israel's spiritual condition at that time, what might possibly explain this famine? (Deuteronomy 28:15, 22-24) _____

1. What is God's promise for those who fear Him? (Psalm 33:18-19) _____

3. What "certain man" decided to sojourn in the land of Moab? (v.1c,2) _____

A. Who did he take with him? _____

1. We are told that Elimelech and his family were "Ephrathites of Bethlehem". Who else is identified as coming forth from Bethlehem Ephrathah? (Micah 5:2) _____

♥ Elimelech left Bethlehem ("the house of bread") to seek provision for himself and his family in a foreign land. Perhaps you (or someone close to you) are considering moving your family somewhere that promises "greener pastures" in a material sense? 🙌 Stop!! Pray fervently for God's perfect wisdom. He **may** be moving you...OR...He **may not**!! Best to pray **before** proceeding.

4. What happened when Elimelech and his family "entered the land of Moab"? (v.2) _____

"Because of a local famine, *Elimelech (my God is King)* took his wife *Naomi (pleasant, lovely)* and his two sons, appropriately named *Mahlon ("puny")* and *Chilion ("pining")*, to visit temporarily in nearby Moab. The country of Moab was about 50 mi (80km) from Bethlehem on the E side of the Dead Sea. Moab was the son of Lot by an incestuous union with his older daughter." Ryrie Study Bible

🕊 Let's practice our memory verse: "Do _____ be _____ of sudden _____ nor of the _____ of the _____ when it comes; For the _____ will be your _____ and will keep your foot from _____ . _____ : _____

DAY TWO

Pray then read *Ruth 1:3-6*

1. What was the first loss that Naomi suffered in the land of Moab? (v.3a) _____

A. Did this loss leave her totally alone? (v.3b) _____ Explain. _____

1. After the early church was established, according to I Timothy 5:3-4, who was responsible to care for a widow in this particular scenario? _____

If a widow had children or grandchildren, it was not the church's responsibility to care for her. There were those who were saying, "We don't have to worry about Mom because the church will take care of her". "No", said Paul. "The first place to show piety is with the older members of your own family who are in need." Jon Courson

2. Naomi's sons "took for themselves Moabite women as wives". Give their names and (using your study helps) the meaning of their names. _____

A. According to Deuteronomy 23:3, what restrictions were placed upon the Moabites? _____

1. What was the reason for these restrictions? (Deuteronomy 23:4) _____

"The masculine forms indicate that a male Ammonite or Moabite is meant. Female proselytes, like Ruth of Moab, could marry male Israelites." Ryrie Study Bible

3. After about ten years in Moab, what additional loss(es) did Naomi suffer? (v.5a) _____

A. This verse goes on to say, "the woman was _____ of her two children and her husband".

Define: BEREFT _____

4. What caused Naomi to turn her heart towards home? (v.6) _____

A. God had "visited" His people in Judah by giving them physical bread. According to Zacharias' prophecy in Luke 1:67-79, what was this particular "visit" intended to accomplish? (Luke 1:68b)

B. Read Luke 19:41-44. What did the Jews fail to recognize? (v.44b) _____

♥ **Something to Ponder:** God "visited" us through the person of Jesus Christ bringing Salvation to the world and then He returned to the Father. He didn't leave us alone, however. He left us a Helper in the person of the Holy Spirit! He is not only with us (a "visitor"), but He dwells in us (a permanent resident)!! Awesome.



Time to practice Proverbs 3:25-26 _____

DAY THREE

Pray then read *Ruth 1:7-14*

1. Naomi and her two daughters-in-law set out for Judah (v.7). Somewhere along the way, Naomi appears to have a change of heart. Record her heartfelt words to Orpah and Ruth in v.8-9. _____

A. What do Naomi's words indicate about the character of these two Moabite women? _____

♥ It was within Naomi's rights to "expect" Orpah and Ruth to stay with her and care for her. However, she couldn't go through with it because they had been so "kind" to her and to her sons. Perhaps we need to search our hearts to see if we are "expecting" (and possibly taking advantage of) someone's loyalty to us when God may be tugging on our hearts...asking us to release them out of love for them and out of devotion to Him. Hmmm....

B. Initially, how did the Moabite women respond? *(v.9b-10) _____

1. Do you believe this response was a testimony to Naomi's godly character? Explain. _____

"This emotion shown is evidence of the real relationship of love between Naomi and her daughters-in-law." David Guzik

2. Naomi passionately reasons with Orpah and Ruth in v.11-13. Carefully consider her words. In a nutshell, **in your own words**, explain her "sensible" plea. _____

A. Sadly, what conclusion had Naomi reached in regard to her present situation? (v.13b) "...for the hand of the Lord has _____."

"She judges herself chiefly aimed at in the affliction, that God's quarrel was principally with her: 'The hand of the Lord has gone out against me. I am the sinner; it is with me that God has a controversy; it is with me that he is contending; I take it to myself.' This well becomes us when we are under affliction; though many others share in the trouble, yet we must hear the voice of the rod as if it spoke only against us and to us, not *billeting the rebukes of it at other people's houses, but taking them to ourselves. She laments most the trouble that redounded to them from it. She was the sinner, but they were the sufferers: *It grieveth me much for your sakes. A gracious generous spirit can better bear its own burden than it can bear to see it a grievance to others, or others in any way drawn into trouble by it.*" Matthew Henry
*casting it upon others

B. Naomi didn't want her daughters-in-law to suffer unnecessary hardship because of her. What does Hebrews 12:15 say? _____

♥ Give a practical example of how your poor decision directly affected the life of another close to you.

3. Even after Naomi's heart-wrenching plea, how did Orpah and Ruth respond? (v.14) _____

Define: CLING _____

A. What a beautiful picture..."Ruth **clung** to her"? As believers, who are we to "cling" to? (Deuteronomy 13:4) _____



Without peeking, write out Proverbs 3:25-26 speaking it out loud as you write: _____

Ask someone if you may share Proverbs 3:25-26 with them. If you did... share with your group 😊

DAY FOUR

Pray then read **Ruth 1:15-18**

1. Ruth and Orpah have found themselves at an extremely difficult crossroad in their lives. Were they to continue on with Naomi, **OR** return home. What did Orpah "choose" to return to? (v.15) _____

A. Orpah "chooses" to return to her people and her gods as well! Read and meditate on Joshua 24:15. What extremely important "choice" must every person make at some time in their life? _____

♥ Have you "chosen" to serve the Lord? Can you confidently say, "...as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD"? (Joshua 24:15) If you have not yet made this critical "choice", He's waiting for you to come to Him, to surrender to Him...He loves you soooo much!!

2. V.16,17 is such a sweet declaration of love and loyalty that these words are often quoted in marriage ceremonies. Let's carefully consider Ruth's tender commitment to Naomi by filling in the blanks: "But Ruth said, *Do not urge me to _____ or turn back from _____; *for where _____, I _____ and where _____, I _____. *Your people shall be _____, *and _____ God, _____ God. *Where _____, I _____, *and there _____ be buried."

A. What does Ruth say in closing this heartfelt statement that reveals just how sincere she really is? (v.17b) _____

1. How do we know that Naomi fully believed her? (v.18b) _____

And your God shall be my God, meant that Naomi's relationship with God made an impact on Ruth. This is striking, because Naomi did not have an easy life. David Guzik



Time to practice Proverbs 3:25-26 _____

DAY FIVE

Pray then read Ruth 1:19-22

1. What effect did Naomi's return have upon the city of Bethlehem? (v.19a) _____

A. What were the women of the city unsure of? (v.19b) _____

1. Why do you believe they were questioning this? _____

2. According to v.20, she said to them, "Do not call me _____; call me _____, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me".

A. Using your NASB study bible footnote, give the meaning of each name:

*Naomi _____

*Mara _____

B. Even in her bitterness, Naomi refers to the LORD as the Almighty (v.20,21), or El Shaddai. What does this tell us about her? _____

1. Who was first introduced to the LORD by this name? (Genesis 17:1) _____

3. Naomi felt that she had left Bethlehem "full" only to return "empty". Had she **really** lost everyone? Explain your answer. _____

♥ Naomi still had Ruth!! It would later be said of her, she "is better to you than seven sons". Naomi also had the LORD, even though she presently deemed herself "afflicted" by Him. Like Naomi, are you in a place of feeling empty? Look around you! You have brothers and sisters in the Lord who love you....AND...the Lord has been with you all along!! Begin **practicing His presence** today. Sit still with Him and thank Him for being with you!!

4. Something to keep in mind as we close this chapter: God is getting everything ready for Ruth (and Naomi). He is carefully orchestrating a beautiful scenario and His timing is impeccable! According to v.22b, what time of year does it just "happen" to be in Bethlehem? _____



Perfect segue to practice & write out your memory verse: _____

*"There is an appointed time for everything.
And there is a time for every event under heaven – "*
Ecclesiastes 3:1

