

# Ruth

## *God's Loving-Kindness Exemplified*

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## RUTH CHAPTER 1

### Study Guide

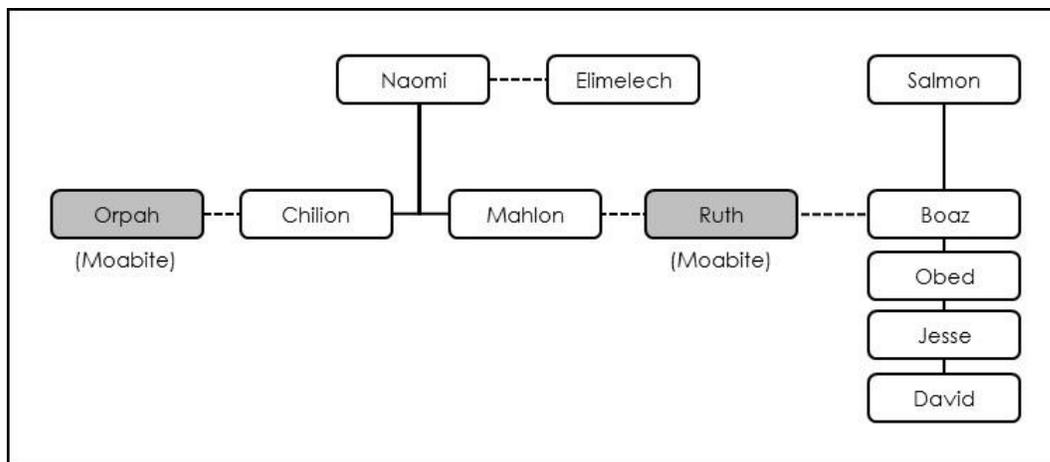
#### A. INTRODUCTION

1. How would you define "loving-kindness"?
2. Describe a time when you have personally experienced God's loving-kindness.

#### B. WHAT THIS BOOK TEACHES US

1. It teaches us about God's sovereignty, wisdom, and loyal love are often disguised in difficult circumstances and shown through the kindness of others (ESV Crossway Bibles 475).
2. It reveals how God welcomes non-Israelites into the Mosaic Covenant thus fulfilling a key part of the Abrahamic Covenant that all nations would be blessed through his descendants.
3. It promotes the practice of Israel's covenant ideal, the lifestyle of loving-kindness (LaSor, Hubbard and Bush 525).
4. It also teaches us about God's divine providence which brought forth King David (4:17-22) who became an ancestor of Jesus Christ.

#### C. CHARACTERS



#### **D. KEY THEMES**

1. Loving kindness: Ruth shows Naomi loving kindness (H. *hesed*) particularly in leaving her home country and family to care for her mother-in-law (1:16-17; 2:11, 18, 23) because she loved her (4:15). Boaz also shows loving-kindness toward Ruth and Naomi.
2. Redemption: Redemption is directly related to loving-kindness and plays a key role in this narrative (2:20).

#### **E. READ RUTH 1:1-5**

1. When did this story begin and what were the conditions at that time? (1:1)
2. Who are the people in this family that moved to Moab? (1:1-2)
3. What happened to Elimelech? (1:3)
4. To whom did these two sons marry? (1:4, see also 4:10)
5. What happened to Mahlon and Chilion about ten years later? (1:5)

#### **F. READ RUTH 1:6-18**

1. Why did Naomi decide to return to the land of Judah and who went with her (1:6-14)
2. How does verse 16 describe Ruth's devotion to Naomi?

#### **G. READ RUTH 1:19-22**

1. Why do you suppose the whole town of Bethlehem was stirred because of Naomi and Ruth (1:19)?
2. Why did Naomi ask people to call her "Mara" (1:20)?

#### **H. APPLICATION**

Naomi felt that God had dealt bitterly with her even though she didn't deserve it. Have you ever felt this way too? Do you feel that God is unfair at times? In what ways does Ruth's devotion to Naomi inspire your devotion to Jesus Christ?

#### **Sources used in this study**

ESV Crossway Bibles. *ESV English Standard Version*. Wheaton: Good News Publishers, 2008.

LaSor, William Sanford, David Allan Hubbard and Frederick William Bush. *Old Testament Survey*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982, 1996.