

The T. E. Lee Bible Study Series



RUTH

Thomas E. Lee

©2025  **Believers Bible Study Library**

27673 E 64th St S, Ste 341, Broken Arrow, OK 74014

Outline of Ruth

Part One: Ruth's Love Is Demonstrated 1:1-2:23

I. Ruth's Decision to Remain with Naomi 1:1-18

- A. Ruth's Need to Remain with Naomi 1:1-5
- B. Ruth's Opportunity to Leave Naomi 1:6-15
- C. Ruth's Choice to Remain with Naomi 1:16-18

II. Ruth's Devotion to Care for Naomi 1:19-2:23

- A. Ruth and Naomi Return to Bethlehem 1:19-22
- B. Ruth Gleans for Food 2:1-23
 - 1. Boaz Meets Ruth 2:1-7
 - 2. Boaz Protects Ruth 2:8-16
 - 3. Boaz Provides for Ruth 2:17-23

Part Two: Ruth's Love is Rewarded 3:1-4:22

I. Ruth's Request for Redemption by Boaz 3:1-18

- A. Naomi Seeks Redemption for Ruth 3:1-5
- B. Ruth Obeys Naomi 3:6-9
- C. Boaz Desires to Redeem Ruth 3:10-18

II. Ruth's Reward of Redemption by Boaz 4:1-22

- A. Boaz Marries Ruth 4:1-12
- B. Ruth Bears a Son: Obed 4:13-15
- C. Naomi Receives a New Family 4:16
- D. Ruth is the Great-Grandmother of David 4:17-22

Taken from *The Open Bible*

Book of Ruth

A Love Story of Redemption in a Day of Apostasy

Introduction

- A. The Book of Ruth takes its name from its chief character: Ruth.
- B. Ruth is one of only two books in the Bible that bear the name of a woman. The other is Esther.

Writer of Ruth

The writer of the book of Ruth is unknown. Samuel has been suggested. If so, it could have been an affirmation of David's rights to the throne of Israel. It is not absolutely necessary to know who wrote it and it should not detract from the tender story that is told.

Location of Ruth in the History of Israel (See History of Israel (Old and New Testament) Handout)

Ruth was written during the period of the Judges. In fact, this was the only bright spot of that period. There were several things that characterized this period.

- A. There was a lack of responsibility and no respect for God. **Judges 21:25**
- B. There was limited prophetic influence. **I Sam. 3:1**
- C. The Levitical priesthood was corrupt. **I Sam. 2:12, 17**
- D. The people desired a king. Why? They did not want God ruling them. They had a theocracy (God ruling them) but they wanted a monarchy. (A king ruling them).
- E. Samuel anointed the first King: Saul. He ruled for 40 years.
- F. Samuel anointed the second King: David. He ruled for 40 years.
- G. The third king was Solomon from the dynasty of David. He ruled for 40 years.

Date of Ruth

- A. It is believed that it was written during the time of David, around 1000 B.C.
- B. We know the period of the Judges was in progress. **Ruth 1:1** This period goes from 1380 B.C. to 1015 B.C., through the life of Samuel. Technically, Samuel was the last judge.
- C. Events of Ruth took place during this period, probably during the latter half. Ruth may have been a contemporary of Gideon.
- D. The genealogy in Ruth terminated with David. **Ruth 4:17-22**
- E. If Ruth was written after David's death, Solomon would probably have been mentioned.
- F. This was also supported by the writing style, vocabulary and the explanation of the local customs.

Ruth 4:7

Background of Ruth

- A. It appears in the Hebrew text in the third part of the canon, "The Writings." You have the Law, the History and the Writings.
- B. Ruth was removed from this position by the Greek translators of the OT (Septuagint) and placed after Judges as it deals with this period.
- C. This position was adopted by the translators of the Latin Vulgate and since then it has been there in all modern Bibles.

Importance of Ruth

A. Ruth contrasts with the period of the Judges:

Ruth

Fidelity, purity
Followed the true God
Love
Kindness
Obedient Faith Leads to Blessing

Judges

Immorality
Idolatry
Lust
Cruelty
Disobedience Leads to
Sorrow
Spiritual Darkness
Life was very permissive

Spiritual Light

People lived in faith in God's

Sovereign control

Judges 21:25

B. Without the Book of Ruth we would have a difficult time connecting the house of David with the tribe of Judah.

C. Typology: Boaz in chapter 2 is a type of Christ as the Kinsman-Redeemer. A type is an illustration based on an OT character, event or institution which, while having a place and purpose in biblical history also by divine design foreshadows something yet future.

Theme of Ruth: Redemption

Various forms of the word "redeem" are used 20 times in Ruth. "Redeem" means to buy out of the marketplace of sin.

A. Ruth is a clear illustration of redemption in the OT.

B. Redemption was possible to Ruth only through a Kinsman-Redeemer. This is true in our situation as well. God could not redeem us apart from a Mediator.

Since only God could redeem, it was necessary for Him to become that person through Jesus Christ.

Gal. 3:13; 4:4-5; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12; I Peter 1:18

The hymn writer said it well:

Free from the Law, O Happy Condition,
Jesus has died and there is remission,
Cursed by the Law and bruised by the Fall,
Christ has redeemed us, once for all.

C. Boaz furnishes the only figure for the Kinsman-Redeemer aspect of redemption in the Bible.

D. Ruth shows the believing remnant was alive and well in this period of apostasy and sin. It deals with common, ordinary people in that day who trusted in Jehovah and followed Him explicitly.

Observations about Ruth

A. Ruth was one of 5 women mentioned in the Matthew 1 genealogy.

1:3 - Tamar

1:5 - Rahab

1:5 - Ruth

1:6 - Bathsheba

1:16 - Mary

B. Three of these five were Gentiles.

Tamar - Genesis 38

Rahab - Joshua 2

Ruth

C. Three of these five had bad records.

Tamar - A seductress.

Rahab - A harlot.

Bathsheba - An adulteress. II Samuel 11

D. Contrasts between Ruth and Esther:

Ruth

A Gentile Woman

Lived Among the Jews

Married a Jewish man in the royal line of David

A story of faith and blessing

Esther

A Jewish Woman

Lived Among the Gentiles

Married a Gentile man who ruled an empire.

A story of faith and blessing

Contribution of Ruth to the Bible

A. Literary. Simple yet profound. One of literature's best examples of family love, piety and godliness.

B. Historical. Ruth is a bridge between Judges and the Monarchy. It illustrates faithfulness amid infidelity.

C. Doctrinal. Ruth teaches that the Gentiles are not outside the scope of redemption. Cf. Rahab, etc.

D. Moral. Ruth communicates the high ideals of integrity in relationships and marriage.

Use of Ruth Today

A. It is read annually by orthodox Jews on the Feast of Pentecost. Pentecost commemorates the giving of the Law at Sinai and occurs at the beginning of the offering called the Firstfruits of the Harvest. **Ex. 23:16**

B. Ruth's engagement to Boaz took place during this festive harvest season when barley was being harvested. **Ruth 1:22; 3:2**

Applications

A. The Sovereignty of God. God worked through ordinary people to accomplish His will. We see this by His preserving the line through which the Messiah would come.

B. Ruth is a tender love story in which we see God's love for us. These were ordinary, average people and the book shows how God worked through them to accomplish His will. We have the assurance that He will do the same for us.

C. We are all important in His sight. We are all sinners and yet He can use us if we live in obedience to Him. In Ruth we are going to see how God guided her and He will do the same for us.

Part One: Ruth's Love is Demonstrated 1:1-2:23

I. Ruth's Decision to Remain with Naomi 1:1-18

A. Ruth's need to Remain with Naomi 1:1-5

1: Vs. 1 -

Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two

sons - **ΚΑΙ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ κρίνειν τοὺς κριτὰς καὶ ἐγένετο λιμὸς ἐν τῇ γῇ· καὶ ἐπορεύθη ἀνὴρ ἀπὸ Βαιθλέεμ τῆς Ἰούδα τοῦ παροικῆσαι ἐν ἀγρῷ Μωάβ, αὐτὸς καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ -**

Now it came to pass - In Greek this is the very common, **καὶ ἐγενετο**, which means it came to be or it happened. Cf. **Joshua 1:1; Judges 1:1**

In the days when the Judges ruled - As we saw in the introduction, this probably occurred during the administration of the judge Gideon. This was a time of spiritual apostasy, with the people turning from the Lord. It was one of the darkest, if not the darkest days in the history of Israel.

The story of the Book of Ruth could have taken place in one of the periods when the land enjoyed peace when God supplied a judge to deliver the Israelites.

Even in this dark time, the light of the Book of Ruth shines all the brighter against this backdrop.

That there was a famine in the land - This famine was in the whole land, not just in Judah. This famine was probably God's acting in judgment on His sinning people. Many years later in Elijah's day God sent another famine on Israel for worshipping Baal. **I Kings 16:30-31; 17:1**

God's control of the crops had a lot to do with the events of the Book of Ruth. Worship of the Canaanite God Baal was common among the Israelites. **Judges 2:11-12**

Baal was believed to be the owner of the land and to control its fertility. Baal's female counterpart was Ashtoreth. Sexual intercourse between these two gods was believed to regulate fertility of the earth.

God had commanded the Israelites under Joshua to get rid of the Canaanites and their idols. **Deut. 7:16** When they failed to do so, **Josh. 16:10**, this left them open to the temptation to look to the idols rather than to God to bless them agriculturally.

Also, the cultic prostitution and sexual practices used in the worship of Baal also enticed the Israelites. Gideon's father had built an altar to Baal, but Gideon had destroyed it. The Book of Ruth shows us the wisdom of trusting in Jehovah and His providence rather than in Canaanite gods.

Famine - This word is used over 100 times in the OT, usually of human hunger. It is very common in Scripture. One occurred in the days of Abraham, **Gen. 12:10**, in the time of Isaac, **Gen. 26:1**, and during Joseph's time. **Gen. 41:53-54** It occurred many other times as well.

Famine can also mean more than a lack of physical food. **Amos 8:11-12**

And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab -

And a certain man - We are not told his name until verse 2.

Of Bethlehem - The name "Bethlehem" means "House of Bread." This is interesting because they were in a famine.

Judah - This was the area of the country that was allotted to the tribe of Judah. Judah means "praise." This is to distinguish it from a village of Zebulun. **Joshua 19:15-16**

Bethlehem was about 5 miles south of Jerusalem. Obed, the son of Ruth and Boaz was born in Bethlehem. **Ruth 4:18-21** David was also born in Bethlehem. **I Sam. 17:58**

Of course, David's greater son, Jesus, was also born in Bethlehem. **Lk. 2:4-7**

Probably Jesus would never have been born in Bethlehem, humanly speaking, if the events in Ruth hadn't taken place in Bethlehem. So, when you sing, O Little Town of Bethlehem this Christmas, think of the events of Ruth that made it all possible.

Went to dwell in the country of Moab - "Dwell" means to live temporarily. This man and his family only intended to live temporarily in Moab until the famine was over and then return to Bethlehem.

Moab - Moab is 50 miles east on the east side of the Dead Sea. It doesn't say why they chose Moab but obviously it was because there was food.

Country of Moab - This means the fields of Moab. This is just south of the Arnon River. Who were the people of Moab? Where did they come from? **Gen. 19:30-38** So the Moabites came from the sexual union of their father, Lot, and his eldest daughter. This took place at Zoar, south of the Dead Sea.

As it turned out, the blessing of God came from Bethlehem, not from Moab, as we will see.

The inhabitants of Moab were excluded from the congregation of the Lord. **Deut. 23:3-6**

When the Children of Israel were approaching Canaan, as they came from the Exodus in Egypt, they asked permission of the Moabites to let them pass through their land and they were not permitted to do this and had to go around.

It was Balak the King of Moab who, along with the Midianites, hired Balaam to curse Israel, who blessed them four times instead.

The Moabite girls thought, "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em." So they seduced the Israelite men in Numbers 25 and God sent a plague that destroyed 24,000 men.

It was on Mt. Pisgah in Moab that Moses viewed the Promised Land and then died and was buried in Moab.

The Moabites were one people who oppressed Israel for 18 years in the period of the Judges until Ehud the Judge delivered Israel.

David, when he was fleeing Saul took his mother and father to the King of Moab for protection. **I Sam. 22:3-4** Relations must have been relatively friendly judging by David taking his mother and father there and also here in Ruth where this family immigrated there to live.

Sanballat in Nehemiah's time oppressed the Jews in the building of the wall, was a Moabite.

Machaerus, the place where John the Baptist was imprisoned and lost his life was in Moab.

Their language was close to Hebrew with a few minor differences. They were worshippers of Chemosh, a deity whose worship was similar to that of Baal. This worship was one where children were offered in the fire, which was destroyed by Josiah, King of Judah, three centuries later. **II Kings 23:13-14**

The Moabites were denounced by the prophets. **Jer. 7:30-34**

He and his wife and his two sons - So there were four of them that went to Moab. It is interesting that **Ps. 108:9** says: "Moab is My washpot." Jehovah says: "Moab is the place where I do My dirty dishes." Here this family left the house of bread and praise and went to live where God does His dirty dishes. Many times we do the same thing. Instead of enjoying God's best (the house of bread and praise), we go off to the pleasures of the world thinking that they can satisfy. We have to be in the place of blessing for God to bless. **I John 2:15-16**

1: Vs. 2 -

The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion--Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there - καὶ ὄνομα τῷ ἀνδρὶ Ἀβειμέλεχ, καὶ ὄνομα τοῖς δυσὶν υἱοῖς αὐτοῦ Μααλὼν καὶ Κελαιὼν, Ἐφραθαῖοι ἐκ Βαιθλέεμ τῆς Ἰουδα· καὶ ἦλθοσαν εἰς ἀγρὸν Μωὰβ καὶ ἦσαν ἐκεῖ -

We are now introduced to the family.

The name of the man was Elimelech - Elimelech means "My God is King." He may or may not lived up to his name.

The name of his wife was Naomi - Naomi was Elimelech's wife. We have to go to **Ruth 1:20-21** to see a wordplay in Hebrew of her name.

Naomi means sweetness and pleasantness in Hebrew. But in vs. 20, in answer to the people's question, "Is this Naomi," she says "Do not call me Naomi, call me Mara," which means bitter. **Ex. 15:22-23** Her point was that her experiences with her husband and sons made her life "bitter," not pleasant and sweet.

And the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion -

Mahlon - Her oldest son, Mahlon means "sick or unhealthy."

Chilion - Her next son, Chilion, means "pining and puny."

So they had two sickly boys. They did not live long after settling in Moab as we will see.

Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah - This was a designation for the inhabitants of Ephrath (also spelled Ephratah and Ephratha), another name for Bethlehem. **Ruth 4:11; Gen. 35:19; 48:7; Micah 5:2** (The birthplace of Jesus the Messiah).

And they went to the country of Moab and remained there - "Remained there" is a different word than in vs. 1.

Verse one says that they "went to dwell" in Moab. This word means that they planned to stay only temporarily, until the famine was over.

But the word that we have here in vs. 2 is literally "they were there," **ἦσαν ἐκεῖ** (LXX). They decided to stay permanently.

1: Vs. 3 -

Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons - καὶ ἀπέθανεν Ἀβειμέλεχ ὁ ἀνὴρ τῆς Νωεμείν, καὶ κατελείφθη αὕτη καὶ οἱ δύο υἱοὶ αὐτῆς -

Elimelech died and she was left with her two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. We are not told how long they were there before Elimelech died. Vs. 4 tells us that they had lived there about 10 years total. So they could not have been there very long before Elimelech died. Naomi now becomes the central figure in the narrative.

1: Vs. 4 -

Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years - καὶ ἐλάβοσαν ἑαυτοῖς γυναῖκας Μωαβεΐτιδας· ὄνομα τῇ μιᾷ Ὀρφά, καὶ ὄνομα τῇ δευτέρᾳ Ῥούθ· καὶ κατόκησαν ἐκεῖ ὡς δέκα ἔτη -

Now they took wives of the women of Moab - The two sons both married Moabite women. The Mosaic Law condemned Canaanite and Moabite marriages. **Deut. 7:3-4; Ezra 9:1-2; Neh. 13:23-26**

Also, Moabites were not to be accepted into the congregation of the Lord. **Deut. 23:3-4** The reason for not marrying them was the temptation to serve their gods. Solomon found this out. **I Kings 11:1-3** Cf. **Mal. 2:11**.

At this point in time we are not told whether Orpah and Ruth had left the Moabite god for the God of Israel. I think Ruth had by the following verses. There is some question about Orpah.

We are told that Salmon married Rahab who was a Canaanite but she had changed when he married her and worshipped the God of Israel. **Mt. 1:5**

The name of the one was Orpah - Orpah means "fawn." I take it that Orpah was the oldest because of being mentioned first.

And the name of the other (second one) **Ruth** - Ruth means "friendship or beauty." We are not told until **Ruth 4:10** that Mahlon married Ruth. Then Chilion was the one who married Orpah.

We are not told how long these marriages lasted, probably not very long, but in any case they were childless.

And they dwelt there about ten years - The basic meaning of "dwell" is to sit. This suggests more of a permanent stay.

Notice the progression. Vs. 1 said they *dwelled* there (temporarily), Vs. 2 said that they *remained* there, they were simply there. Here in vs. 4, it says that they *sat* there (suggesting a more permanent stay).

Their intention at first was simply to go to Moab temporarily to escape the famine, but they gradually got used to being there and decided not to return to Bethlehem.

It had progressively gotten more like home. The thought of Bethlehem being the house of bread and praise and the place of God's blessing is growing dimmer by the days and years.

That is what happens to us when we decide to take on the world system governed by Satan. We gradually get used to it and after a while we become acclimated and we do not want to return to the place of God's blessing.

One commentator gives us a suggestion: "The onset of a famine in the promised land was always a test of faith, as well as, on occasion, an expression of divine chastisement. The proper response to such a test would be to stay in the land *in dependence on God*, as did the majority of the residents of Bethlehem."

1: Vs. 5 -

Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband - καὶ ἀπέθανον καὶ γε ἀμφότεροι, Μασλὼν καὶ Χελαιὼν· καὶ κατελείφθη ἡ γυνὴ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν δύο υἱῶν αὐτῆς -

Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died - I take it that Mahlon was the oldest by being mentioned first and he married the younger Ruth.

We are not told how long they were married but they died within this ten year time frame that they were there in Moab.

So the woman (Naomi) survived her two sons and her husband - Naomi was literally left alone. All she had left of her family was her two daughters-in-law.

Jewish tradition regards the death of these three males, Elimelech, Mahlon and Chilion as God's punishment for their leaving Bethlehem.

This is possible because in the case of Abraham and Isaac leaving the Promised Land, their leaving was not a time of blessing. The land of Israel has always been the place of blessing. However, the text does not specifically say this.

However, God might put "famines" in our lives to see how we will react. How you and I react will determine whether God will bless us or give us sorrow.

We need to realize also that not all sorrow comes from being out of the will of God or the place of God's blessing. When we experience sorrow, this might be God's way of seeing how we will react to Him. Job said: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

So the woman survived her two sons and her husband - Naomi found herself in a very precarious situation. Her husband and her two sons had died prematurely. She was a stranger in a foreign land.

It was through the male that the line was continued in the Jewish scheme of things. If the family name were to carry on there had to be an heir. But having no sons, there was virtually no hope. Her two daughters-in-law apparently gave her no hope for an heir.

What will Naomi do now? She is left alone in an alien land with only her two Moabitish daughters-in-law. One commentator describes her situation: "Her circumstances had spiraled down to a point at which she had no way to provide for herself in Moab."

B. Ruth's Opportunity to Leave Naomi 1:6-15

The main narrative portion now begins. Dialogue was the primary device used by the writer. Fifty-nine of the eighty-four verses in the book contain dialogue, beginning in verse 8.

1: Vs. 6 -

Then she (Naomi) arose with her daughters-in-law (Orpah and Ruth) that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread - *Καὶ ἀνέστη αὐτὴ καὶ αἱ δύο νύμφαι αὐτῆς καὶ ἀπέστρεψαν ἐξ ἀγροῦ Μωάβ, ὅτι ἤκουσαν ἐν ἀγρῷ Μωάβ ὅτι Ἐπέσκεπται Κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ, δοῦναι αὐτοῖς ἄρτους* -

Then she arose with her daughters-in-law - Notice that initially both of the daughters-in-law were leaving with her. However, I think she took them both, only to see her safely to the borders of the land. I don't think she had any intention of taking them all the way back to Judah. But, as we will see, Ruth had other ideas.

That she might return from the country of Moab - Different forms of the word "return" are used in this chapter. She turned from Moab and planned to return to Judah.

You have to give Naomi credit to take her situation in hand and do something about it. Here she was all alone and she made the decision to go and she made preparations to go. Then the reason for her decision is given:

For she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread - Naomi had heard and learned that rain had come to her homeland. The famine was over. This was probably the time of the deliverance of Judah by the Judge Gideon.

After living in Moab for ten years and having heard that the famine was over in Judah, she decided to leave and return there. One comments: "She turned her back on the tragic graves of her loved ones and headed back to Judah, her homeland." She realized that the place of blessing was in the land.

That the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread - This is the first mention of God's name in the story. Notice that it was Yahweh who had sent the rain and not the god Baal. The Canaanites believed that Baal was the one who sent rain and fertility to the land.

Bread - This would include crops from the field and fruit from the trees.

1: Vs. 7 -

Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah - καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ τόπου οὗ ἦν ἐκεῖ, καὶ αἱ δύο νύμφαι αὐτῆς μετ' αὐτῆς· καὶ ἐπορεύοντο ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι εἰς τὴν γῆν Ἰούδα -

Naomi with her two daughters-in-law left the country of Moab where she had lived for ten years. They went on the road that led them back to the land of Judah.

Where she was - These are the same two words that we saw back in verse 2, **ἦσαν ἐκεῖ**, translated as "they remained there."

To return - Again, another use of the word "return."

1: Vs. 8 -

And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me - καὶ εἶπεν Νωεμὶν ταῖς νύμφαις αὐτῆς Πορεύεσθε δὴ, ἀποστράφητε ἐκάστη εἰς οἶκον μητρὸς αὐτῆς· ποιήσαι Κύριος μεθ' ὑμῶν ἔλεος, καθὼς ἐποιήσατε μετὰ τῶν τεθνηκότων καὶ μετ' ἐμοῦ -

This begins the dialogue section which makes up most of the book.

Naomi speaks to her two daughters-in-law with two imperatives, "Go!" And "Return!" They are very emphatic. We would say, "Go!" "Go back!"

Each to her mother's house - We understand from this that these were not sisters. Each of them was to return to their own mother's house, not the same house.

We know that both her father and her mother were still alive from **Ruth 2:11**.

To say this was unusual in a male dominated society. But Naomi was thinking of their remarriages and this would best be handled by the mothers. In this case it was "Mother knows best!" instead of "Father Knows Best!"

Naomi was also probably thinking of how hard it would be for them in the land of Judah. They would be looked down on because they are Gentiles from Moab. They would have a hard time remarrying.

So Naomi tells them it would be better for them socially and they would have a better chance to remarry if they returned to their own country.

The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me - This is the second time we have seen the use of the word LORD, all caps. It was used in vs. 6 and now again it is used in vs. 8. It is translated in the LXX with the Greek word **κύριος**. It is the word YAHWEH in the Hebrew. **Ex. 6:2-3** (He did not mean that they had never heard the name of Yahweh before because it is mentioned several times in Genesis but he means that the meaning of the word Yahweh was not known. The name speaks of the redemption of the LORD from Egypt, not from Canaan as revealed in Genesis).

The LORD deal kindly with you - This is the Hebrew word "Hesed" revealing the lovingkindness of Jehovah to His people. The word reveals both God's loyalty to His covenant and also His love for His people.

It is also used in **Ruth 1:9; 2:20; 3:10** as well as 16 times in all, in the Book of Ruth.

This speaks of God's covenant relationship to Israel. He was forever faithful to His people. It involved grace even when it was not deserved.

These were Moabite women. But because they married Jewish men she considered them under the blessing of God's covenant.

As you have dealt with the dead and with me - Naomi's basis of wishing God's lovingkindness was because of Ruth and Orpah's treatment of her sons and with her. Both of them were worthy and she wanted God's lovingkindness for them.

Evidently both of them were model daughters-in-law. It shows her great love for them. Even though they were Moabite girls they were loved by Naomi and were not the run of the mill Moabite.

They didn't have to have such devotion to her. They obviously weren't being nice to her because of anything they were going to get from her monetarily. She was destitute in every way, and yet they still respected her.

They considered themselves still a part of the family of Naomi, even though they still had a father and mother living.

They were willing to leave their own mother and father and to go with their mother-in-law to the land of blessing.

1: Vs. 9 -

The LORD grant that you may find rest, (Hesed) each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept - δόξη Κύριος ὑμῖν καὶ εὕροιτε ἀνάπαυσιν, ἐκάστη ἐν οἴκῳ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς. καὶ κατεφίλησεν αὐτάς· καὶ ἐπήραν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶν καὶ ἔκλαυσαν - εκλαυσαν -

The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband - Naomi wanted both of them to go back and find a place of rest with another husband. This becomes a key issue in the book.

Rest - This meant security and a sense of inner ease, release from pressures and tensions. **Isa. 28:12** God alone is able to supply such a rest. **Josh. 22:4** It speaks of the security that was found in marriage in those days.

Marriage meant security for a woman and yet Naomi seems to be bypassing this possibility by leaving Moab. **Ruth 3:1**

Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept - Naomi's kisses were meant as farewells to both of them. It showed her love for them.

Their reaction was to weep. They loved her as well. They also knew that they might never see each other again and this too brought sorrow. They remembered the good times that they had had in Moab as a family.

1: Vs. 10 -

And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people – καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῇ Μετὰ σοῦ ἐπιστρέφομεν εἰς τὸν λαόν σου -

Literally it says: "And they said to her, Indeed, with you we will go back to your people."

This is a very strong emphatic statement. "We will surely go back with you." What they were saying was "We are putting all of our hopes on you and not on some future husband. It is you we care about." Notice that both of them said this to Naomi.

To your people - The people blessed by God. I am sure that over the years Naomi had related to Ruth and Orpah the dealings that God had had with His people.

We don't know how many of her people they knew but what they knew of Naomi was enough for them.

1: Vs. 11 -

But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? - καὶ εἶπεν Νωεμὶν Ἐπιστράφητε δὴ, θυγατέρες μου· καὶ ἵνα τί πορεύεσθε μετ' ἐμοῦ; μὴ ἔτι μοι υἱοὶ ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ μου, καὶ ἔσονται ὑμῖν εἰς ἀνδρας; -

Turn back - This is the same word as in verse 8. Naomi tells them three times to return to Moab. Vss. 11, 12, 15.

My daughters - Notice that they were not just her daughters-in-law. She treated them as her own daughters.

Why will you go with me - "What could you possibly see in me for your security?" She tries once more to discourage them.

Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? - This is a very startling statement. "If you are thinking that I will have more sons for you to marry, forget it."

William MacDonald sees three different adjectives to describe these three widows. Naomi represents the *grieving* widow, without husband and family. Orpah was the *leaving* widow, who chose the easiest and most convenient course. But Ruth was a *cleaving* widow, cleaving to Naomi in spite of Naomi's discouragements.

We need to understand here a custom in Israel. This will figure prominently in the teaching of the Kinsman-Redeemer later. It is the Law of Levirate Marriage. **Deut. 25:5-10**

Levirate - This comes from the Latin, "Levir," meaning a brother-in-law. The law stated: "If a man died, leaving no son, the widow was not to go out and marry a foreigner or one from another tribe. His brother was to marry the widow and the first son would bear the name of the dead brother so that his name would continue in the family register and he would inherit the property of the deceased man.

If the brother refused to do so then the next male relative had the right to do so which is what happened later on in the Book of Ruth. It was not strictly commanded, but it was considered a duty of love."

It was first mentioned in **Gen. 38:8** where Onan, the son of Judah, was called upon to marry his brother Er's widow.

It is also alluded to in **Mt. 22:23-30** where the Sadducees pose a hypothetical question to Jesus.

What Naomi is saying is that "I have no more sons for you to wait on to take up my sons' roles who have died. There are no sons there to marry you in obedience to the Law of Levirate Marriage." For a modern-day adaptation of this law, see the Hallmark Hall of Fame movie, "Loving Leah."

1: Vs. 12 -

Turn back, my daughters, go--for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons - ἐπιστρέφετε δὴ, θυγατέρες μου, διότι γεγήρακα τοῦ μὴ εἶναι ἀνδρὶ· ὅτι εἶπα ὅτι ἔστιν μοι ὑπόστασις τοῦ γεννηθῆναι με ἀνδρὶ καὶ τέξομαι υἱούς

Turn back, my daughters, go - This is the third time she told them to return. Cf. 8, 11. She was hoping that "the third time was the charm." "Turn back, go!" This time she was very emphatic.

For I am too old to have a husband - She was too old for all practical purposes.

If I should say I have hope (which I don't) if I should have a husband tonight (which I don't) and should also bear sons - Even if there should be a slight possibility.

1: Vs. 13 -

Would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me! - μὴ αὐτοὺς προσδέξεσθε ἕως οὗ ἀδρυνθῶσιν; ἢ αὐτοῖς κατασχεθῆσεσθε τοῦ μὴ γενέσθαι ἀνδρὶ; μὴ δὴ θυγατέρες μου, ὅτι ἐπικράνθη μοι ὑπὲρ ὑμᾶς, ὅτι ἐξῆλθεν ἐν ἐμοὶ χεὶρ Κυρίου

Would you wait for them till they were grown? - Again, this was impossible to even think of. The obvious answer is No!

Would you restrain yourselves from having husband's - You are at the age of marrying and having children. Would you force yourselves from not having husbands? Even if you waited, you would more than likely be past the age of childbearing. Again, the obvious answer is No!

For it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me - She is really blaming herself because she had lost her husband and two sons and had no real hope of reclaiming them but they had the opportunity to remarry and have families.

Naomi was in a stage of grief that caused her to speak out against God. She saw her situation as the result of God's affliction. **Ruth 1:20-21**

The hand of the LORD has gone out against me - Even so, Naomi was a woman of faith. She had no doubt that God was actively involved in their lives. **Ruth 1:8-9; 2:20a** She saw that God was sovereign and the ultimate cause of her affliction. She realized that all that had happened to her was of the Lord's doing.

1: Vs. 14 -

Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her - καὶ ἐπῆραν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶν καὶ ἔκλαυσαν ἔτι· καὶ κατεφίλησεν Ὀρπά τὴν πενθερὰν αὐτῆς καὶ ἐπέστρεψεν εἰς τὸν λαὸν αὐτῆς, Ρούθ δὲ ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῇ -

Then they lifted up their voices and wept again - Cf. vs. 9. They are the same words with "again" added.

Orpah kissed her mother-in-law - Again, she was showing her love to Naomi. She finally agreed with Naomi and left. Nothing more is said of Orpah in the book of Ruth. Presumably she remarried in Moab.

But Ruth clung to her - Ruth, on the other hand, did the unexpected. She could not bear to part from Naomi. "To cling" was a sign of loyalty and affection with the idea of physical proximity. She hung on to her. Ruth was showing true religion according to **James 1:27. Gen. 2:24**

1: Vs. 15 -

And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law - καὶ εἶπεν Νωεμὲν πρὸς Ρούθ Ἰδοὺ ἀνέστρεψεν σύννυμός σου πρὸς λαὸν αὐτῆς καὶ πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς αὐτῆς· ἐπιστράφητι δὴ καὶ σὺ ὀπίσω τῆς συννύμφου σου -

Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people - Implying that "You should do the same."

Has gone back - This is the fourth time she said to go back, but this time it was only to Ruth. Orpah had already left.

Humanly speaking, this was a great temptation and pressure to Ruth to take the easy way and return to Moab.

And to her gods - Naomi had told them before to go back to her people but never to "her gods." She says that Orpah had done so. This is why I believe that Orpah had not embraced Israel's God.

Return after your sister-in-law - This is the second time in this verse that she told her to return.

Why do you think that Naomi did not try to talk her daughter-in-law Ruth into returning with her? After all, in spite of the problems they would encounter, they would have the God of Israel, the true God, who would be better than Chemosh, the false god.

The possibility existed, however slight, of marrying in Israel. After all, the Law of Moses forbid an Israelite from marrying a Moabite.

Orpah represented the Gentiles who were "Lo-Ammi," (Not my people), **Hosea 1:9**. Ruth, on the other hand, chose the step of faith that incorporated her into those who were called "Ammi," (My people), and more importantly, in her becoming the ancestress of Christ.

I think Naomi was not painting a rosy picture to Ruth on purpose. She wanted her to know what she would be facing in Judah. Naomi did not make it easy for Ruth to come with her.

We should let people know what the Christian life entails. Someone recently said to me, "I never had problems until I became a Christian. Now, however, I have the means to face them. Naomi told it like it was.

We need to realize that a very important decision was made by Ruth here. Dr. McGee comments: "The decision made here will determine whether Jesus would be born in Bethlehem or not. And if the right decision is not made there, you might as well send word to the Wise Men not to come because He won't be born there."

C. Ruth's Choice to Remain with Naomi 1:16-18

These three verses are recognized as one of the most touching passages in literature. One of the commentators

expressed it this way: "In one of the most beautiful expressions of commitment in all the world's literature she laced her future to that of Naomi."

1: Vs. 16 -

But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God - εἶπεν δὲ Ρούθ Μὴ ἀπαντήσαι ἐμοὶ τοῦ καταλιπεῖν σε ἢ ἀποστρέψαι ὀπισθέν σου, ὅτι σὺ ὅπου ἂν πορευθῇς πορεύσομαι, καὶ οὗ ἂν ἀλισθῇς ἀλισθήσομαι· ὁ λαός σου λαός μου, καὶ ὁ θεός σου θεός μου -

But Ruth said - Notice the contrast. In spite of all Naomi had said to Ruth and the fact that Orpah had already left, she had weighed the costs and had determined to go with her. This was a complete break with the past.

Entreat me not to leave you - "Do not beg me or urge me to leave you anymore. I have decided to go with you and that is that."

Or to turn back from following after you - The verb "turn back" is used over and over. This is the 9th time that it has been used in this chapter. This is reminiscent of Elijah and Elisha. **II Kings 2:2, 4, 6.**

For wherever you, I will go - Ruth shows complete identification with Naomi in spite of all the things that could happen to her. Should Naomi go to the end of the world, Ruth would go with her. But Ruth realized that she would be going to Israel where the God of Israel was served.

Wherever you lodge, I will lodge - The company of Naomi in a cottage would be more pleasant to her than that of any of the Moabitish women in a palace.

Your people shall be my people - It made no difference to Ruth that the people of Judah would be very poor after such a long famine. *Shall be* is in italics which means that it is not in the text. "Your people, my people, Your God, my God. Not "shall be."

And your God, my God - She uses the name Elohim, the all-powerful God of Judah. This lets us know that Ruth had been instructed as to the true God by Naomi and she had made her decision. Note the progression in her faith: Go, Lodge, Your people, Your God. There was no question of her faith in the God of Judah. She was a genuine proselyte.

Ruth made her decision to leave her idolatrous past as Abraham did but without being encouraged by a promise. In fact, she had been *discouraged* by Naomi.

There was a song in the 50's that was very popular and was many weeks on the hit parade.

Wherever thou goest, I will go,
Wherever thou lodgest, I will lodge.
Thy people shall be my people, my love,
Wherever thou goest, I will go.

Probably not many people knew that it came from the Bible, much less from the Book of Ruth.

1: Vs. 17 -

Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me - καὶ οὐκ ἂν ἀποθάνῃς ἀποθανοῦμαι, κάκει ταφῆσομαι. τάδε ποιῆσαι μοι Κύριος καὶ τάδε προσθεῖν, ὅτι θάνατος διαστελεῖ ἀνὰ μέσον ἐμοῦ καὶ σοῦ -

Where you die, I will die - This will be a lifelong commitment. It will last even unto death. Again, Ruth associates herself with Naomi.

There will I be buried - No one will have to send me back to Moab to be buried but I want to be buried in Judah.

The LORD do so to me and more also - She commits herself to Jehovah, the covenant keeping God of Judah, not the gods of Moab. "And more also" is very common in the literature of the Bible. **I Sam. 3:17** (Eli to Samuel), **I Sam. 14:44** (Saul to Jonathan), **I Sam. 20:13**, (Jonathan to David), **I Kings 19:2** (Jezebel to Elijah). In all of these cases, this was very serious business.

Ruth is asking judgment from Judah's God if she were to break her commitment.

If anything but death parts you and me - "Death and nothing else than death shall separate us from each other." This vow means "May the Lord punish me severely if I do not keep my vow."

So, we see in Ruth's declaration to Naomi a sevenfold decision:

1. Wherever you go, I will go - "I'm going where you go. I am not just using this as a passport to Judah."

2. Wherever you lodge, I will lodge - "I will identify myself with you, even in my living arrangements."

3. Your people shall be my people - "I'm forsaking my people who are idolaters and I'm identifying myself with God's people."

4. And your God, my God - "I am forsaking the false and dead god Chemosh for the true and living God of Judah." This is the essence of what Joshua said. **Joshua 24:15**

5. Where you die, I will die. The Israelites in the OT believed that they would be raised from the dead to live in that land. That was the hope of Abraham. **Heb. 11:10** Cf. **John 14:2**. We used to sing the chorus: "This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through."

6. There will I be buried - Ruth's hope was in the land.

7. May God judge me if I break this commitment. I made this decision for eternity.

1: Vs. 18 -

When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her - ἰδοῦσα δὲ Νωεμὲν ὅτι κραταιοῦται αὐτὴ τοῦ πορεύεσθαι μετ' αὐτῆς, ἐκόπασεν τοῦ λαλῆσαι πρὸς αὐτὴν ἔτι -

When she (Naomi) saw that she (Ruth) was determined to go with her - "Determined" means to stiffen one's self firmly upon a thing. This is stubbornness in the good sense.

Ruth was steadfast in her decision and so Naomi accepted it and stopped trying to get her to return. She saw her decision was genuine. The events that followed show that her life matched her confession.

II. Ruth's Devotion to Care for Naomi 1:19-2:23

A. Ruth and Naomi Return to Bethlehem 1:19-22

1: Vs. 19 -

Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" - Ἐπορεύθησαν δὲ ἀμφότεραι ἕως τοῦ παραγενέσθαι αὐτὰς εἰς Βαιθλέεμ. καὶ ἤχησεν πᾶσα ἡ πόλις ἐπ' αὐτῆς, καὶ εἶπον Αὕτη ἐστὶν Νωεμὲν; -

Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem - The two of them go on their way to return to Bethlehem. This was quite an undertaking to walk the 50 or so miles back to Bethlehem.

Two of them - As far as we know, these two were the only ones going. This was quite risky because of thieves and robbers along the road.

There was no protection for two women alone. This showed a great faith in Jehovah. They knew the Lord was leading them back and so He would protect them.

This is like the Israelites going back to Jerusalem after the captivity in Babylon. They considered it as a lack of faith in God if they asked for protection. **Ezra 8:21-23**

There is no record of Ruth ever asking to go back and tell her parents goodbye. She had probably already done this.

And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that all the city was excited because of them

All the city was excited because of them - There were at least three things that they were excited about:

1. That Naomi was still alive. They probably had not heard from her in these ten years.
2. That Naomi was alone. She went out with her husband and two sons and now returned with only a stranger.
3. That she was mournful. They asked the question, "Is this Naomi?" It evidently showed to them and they noticed it right away. She was a pleasant woman when she left as her name implied but her return was a different story. They could tell it in her face.

All the city - Evidently, she was well known by all. Of course, Bethlehem was not a very large place. There were mostly women who greeted them by the feminine forms of the verbs. The men were probably busy in the harvest.

Is this Naomi? - They recognized her but were surprised at her worsened condition. She had left to escape the famine and the bad conditions in Bethlehem and had returned in a lot worse condition than when she left.

"Is this the pleasant one who left us? What has happened while she was in Moab?" Just seeing her old friends again brought up the sweet memories of her time before in Bethlehem but now when she thought of

her present circumstances, she had great sorrow. Also remember that these women were those who stayed in Bethlehem in spite of the famine.

Also notice that there is no indication that the women saw that Ruth had come with her. Naomi did not introduce Ruth to the women, at least in the text. They made no comment about Ruth.

1: Vs. 20 -

But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me – καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτάς Μὴ δὴ καλεῖτέ με Νωεμὶν, καλέσατέ με Πικράν, ὅτι ἐπικράνθη ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ ἱκανὸς σφόδρα -

But she said to them - Naomi reacts to the question of the women: "Is this Naomi?"

Do not call me Naomi - "Do not call me Naomi, which means "pleasantness" because my circumstances have been anything but pleasant.

Call me Mara - Call me "Mara" or "bitter." And then she relates why they should call her that.

For the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me - Naomi realized God as the One who brought these things upon her. **Ruth 1:13**

Almighty - She uses the name "El-Shaddai," the all powerful and all sufficient One. She still felt grief but realized where it came from. **Gen. 17:1**

I don't think she is blaming God here but just stating facts. She knew the bitter things were real but she also knew they were from Him. John Reed writes: "Naomi had such faith in God and his personal involvement in her life that she knew the bitter things she experienced were from Him. Her grief was real; obviously she took God seriously."

If only we could look above our circumstances and realize He is with us. **Ps. 42:5; Lam. 3:31-33**
Carson comments: "These words were dictated by passion rather than by judgment; not indeed by the passions of anger and discontentment, but by the passion of grief, and of grief excited by the best and loveliest affections."

What God takes away, He always makes it up to us. **Hab. 3:17-19**

1: Vs. 21 -

I went out full, and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me? - ἐγὼ πλήρης ἐπορεύθην, καὶ κενὴν ἀπέστρεψέν με ὁ κύριος· καὶ ἵνα τί καλεῖτέ με Νωεμὶν, καὶ Κύριος ἐταπείνωσέν με, καὶ ὁ ἱκανὸς ἐκάκωσέν με; -

I went out full, and the LORD has brought me home again empty - Naomi elaborates on what she said in verse 20.

I went out full - She went out rich, not just in money and property but in the possession of a husband and two sons.

Empty - No husband nor two sons. Her hope was pretty well gone also as far as she knew. But she was not totally empty because she had acquired Ruth. If she only knew what the future held. **Ruth 4:14-15**

Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me? - Even though she thought she was destitute of the good things of life, she still had the LORD and the blessings He supplies.

Almighty - Again, she uses the name "El-Shaddai" the all-powerful God. Her complaint began and ended with a reference to the Almighty, the all-powerful God.

LORD - She also uses the name Yahweh or Jehovah. He is the covenant-keeping God of Israel. She realized that He would never go back on His covenant to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. She recognized God's hand in all that had happened to her.

Even in the face of all her tragedies, the LORD was about to begin working on her behalf.

1: Vs. 22 -

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest - καὶ ἐπέστρεψεν Νωεμὶν καὶ Ῥούθ ἡ Μωαβεῖτις ἡ νύμφη αὐτῆς ἐπιστρέφουσα ἐξ ἀγροῦ Μωάβ· αὗται δὲ παρεγενήθησαν εἰς Βαιθλὲμ ἐν ἀρχῇ θερισμοῦ κριθῶν -

This final verse in the chapter gives a summary and transition between no hope for Naomi and the beginning of hope for her.

So Naomi returned - Notice that the writer sees Naomi as pleasant and sweet, not bitter. God still considered her who she really was, not what she thought about herself.

Beginning of barley harvest - Naomi had left Bethlehem because of a famine; she returned with the bounty of the barley harvest.

Barley harvest - The barley harvest occurred in March-April of the first month (Nisan) for the Israelites. See the handout, "Calendar in Israel."

They are now back in the place of blessing, and we are going to see how the LORD blesses them abundantly. God was now through His providence going to provide for both widows.

B. Ruth Gleans for Food 2:1-23

1. Boaz Meets Ruth 2:1-7

Ruth was now a believer in Yahweh. Moabites were excluded from the congregation of Israel. **Deut. 23:3** So Ruth was there by grace. In Ruth two we see how she was received by the people of Bethlehem.

2: Vs. 1 -

There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz - Καὶ τῇ Νωεμὲν ἄνῃρ γνώριμος τῷ ἀνδρὶ αὐτῆς· ὁ δὲ ἄνῃρ δυνατὸς ἰσχύι ἐκ τῆς συγγενίας Ἀβειμέλεχ, καὶ ὄνομα αὐτῷ Βόος

There was a relative of Naomi's husband - Up to now the text is dominated by females. Now it is modified by the introduction of Boaz, a male.

Relative of Naomi's husband - An acquaintance, a family member. Rabbinical tradition says Boaz was a nephew of Elimelech.

A man of great wealth - Boaz was a rich man because he had property and animals. Anyone who owned property was wealthy in that culture. But, as we will see, he was a quality person as well as wealthy. Contrast him with Naomi who was very poor.

Literally, it means that Boaz was a man of standing or a mighty man of valor. These words are used of Gideon and Jephthah. **Judges 6:12; 11:1**

The character of Boaz is in contrast with the period of the judges where everyone did what was right in their own eyes. Boaz was one of the exceptions.

Of the family of Elimelech - He was on Naomi's husband's side of the family.

His name was Boaz - Boaz means "in him is strength." Evidently Boaz had the means to sustain himself in the famine whereas Elimelech left the land to seek bread.

So, Boaz was a wealthy relative of Elimelech and was the son of Rahab, the former prostitute who hid the spies and survived the collapse of Jericho because of her faith in God. **Mt. 1:5**

2: Vs. 2 -

So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter - καὶ εἶπεν Ῥοῦθ ἡ Μωαβεῖτις πρὸς Νωεμὲν Πορευθῶ δὴ εἰς ἀγρόν, καὶ συνάξω ἐν τοῖς στάχυσιν κατόπισθεν οὗ ἔὰν εὕρω χάριν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ. εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῇ Πορεύου, θυγάτηρ -

So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi - This was how she was known when she returned with Naomi. But even though she was a Moabitess, she was a woman of virtue and piety. She is referred to as "Ruth the Moabitess" five times in the book.

Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor - Ruth was an industrious woman. She wanted to do her part to help supply their needs. She is described as a virtuous woman. We are reminded of a virtuous woman in Proverbs 31. This was a characteristic of Ruth as well. She was not afraid to work.

Some women in Naomi's condition would think themselves entitled to decent support from their rich relations. But we are not told that Naomi had even gone to Boaz to plead for support.

And glean heads of grain - This is how Gleaner Combine got its name. This was part of the Mosaic system. It was put in place to take care of the poor. Lev. 19:9-10 Ruth obviously knew of this law, perhaps from Naomi.

God did not put the poor on relief. They had to work to glean in the fields. They had a right by law to glean in the fields of the Israelites.

Ruth was poor and was a foreigner. So she qualified on both counts.

After him in whose sight I may find favor - Some landowners were known to have left as much as one-fourth of their crop for the needy. Some, on the other hand, were not so generous and even forbid the poor to glean in their fields.

She was willing to accept as a favor what she might have claimed as a right. She was appreciative of the opportunity even though the law was in her favor.

Notice that there is no thought here of returning to Moab where she could probably have married and had it easier. Carson comments: "Ruth would rather have been a gleaner of grain in the land of Israel than a lady in the land of Moab. She had come to trust under the shadow of the wings of Naomi's God; and the meanest estate in the land where He was known was preferable in her eyes to the highest station in a land of idolaters."

Notice also that Ruth does not ask Naomi to go with her. She would rather have Naomi rest and go herself to the fields to provide for them.

And she said to her, "Go my daughter - Naomi encouraged her to go and glean.

2: Vs. 3 -

Then she left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech - καὶ ἐπορεύθη, καὶ συνέλεξεν ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ κατόπισθεν τῶν θεριζόντων· καὶ περιέπεσεν περιπτώματι τῇ μερίδι τοῦ ἀγροῦ Βόος, τοῦ ἐκ συγγενείας Ἀβειμέλεχ -

Then she left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers - How was Ruth to know which field to go to? She didn't know one field from the other because she had never done this before.

And she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech -

She happened - Lit. The Hebrew says: "Her chance chanced." In other words, she just happened to go to Boaz's field. But as we will see, there are no happenstances with God. Because of the sovereignty of God, this

is no coincidence at all. Rom. 8:28

The use of "happened to come" was the writer's way of acknowledging the providence of God in Ruth's life. She was guided by God, not by chance. Ps. 37:23

From man's viewpoint, the same providence that led the Magi to Bethlehem, directed Ruth to the appropriate Bethlehem field. It never says that Naomi directed her to go to the field of Boaz. She had not determined to go to a particular field but "happened" to go to the field of Boaz. Esther 5:1

Belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech - We had been introduced to Boaz in vs. 1. The significance of this fact was hidden to Ruth until Ruth 2:20.

This field was probably owned by several people, one being Boaz. That is why it says that this was "part of the field belonging to Boaz."

Again, there is a very important decision to be made here. If Ruth goes into the wrong field, humanly speaking, you might as well tell the wise men not to come to Bethlehem and the shepherds to stay on the hillsides with their flocks because Jesus will not be born in Bethlehem if Ruth goes to the wrong field because she will never meet Boaz.

2: Vs. 4 -

Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, "The LORD *be* with you!" And they answered him, "The LORD bless you! - Καὶ ἰδοὺ Βόος ἦλθεν ἐκ Βαιθλέεμ καὶ εἶπεν τοῖς θερίζουσιν Κύριος μεθ' ὑμῶν· καὶ εἶπον αὐτῷ Εὐλόγησαι σε Κύριος -

Now behold - Something spectacular is going to happen next. Pay close attention!

Boaz came from Bethlehem - Boaz came out from Bethlehem to see how the harvest was progressing in his fields.

The Lord be with you - the Lord bless you - This was a form of greeting in that day. But there was more to it than this. This showed that there were good relations between Boaz (management) and his workers (labor). Faith in the Lord was active in both of their lives. Maybe more problems would be solved today between management and labor if the Lord had a place in each side's life. **Ps. 129:5-8**

2: Vs. 5 -

Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this? - καὶ εἶπεν Βόος τῷ παιδαρίῳ αὐτοῦ τῷ ἐφεστῶτι ἐπὶ τοὺς θερίζοντας Τίνος ἡ νεᾶνις αὕτη; -

Servant - This was a young adult male old enough to serve in the army. It is used in the plural in **Ruth 2:21**.

Whose young woman is this? - This is the feminine form of the young adult male, the servant. Perhaps it was her appearance or dress that was different. He noticed that she was a foreigner.

Whose young woman is this? Lit. the Hebrew says, "the young woman, the that one." Or that particular one. The word for "young woman" indicates that she was probably in her early twenties. This shows that Boaz really noticed her. Was this love at first sight? Judging from what happened, I would say yes. (Example of Loretta in print shop). Dr. McGee says that this was "a Hebrew wolf whistle."

2: Vs. 6 -

So the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered and said, "It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab - καὶ ἀπεκρίθη τὸ παιδάριον τὸ ἐφεστὸς ἐπὶ τοὺς θερίζοντας καὶ εἶπεν Ἡ παῖς ἡ Μωαβεῖτις ἐστίν, ἡ ἀποστραφεῖσα μετὰ Νωεμὲν ἐξ ἀγροῦ Μωάβ -

The servant fills him in on the details of who she is.

It is the young Moabite woman - Some have thought this was a derogatory statement, but the text does not indicate this.

Who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab - Ruth was a Moabite and they were not allowed into the congregation of the Lord unto the 10th generation but her being associated with Naomi and having left the Moabite gods for the God of Israel made her accepted.

We are not told how he knew this. He may have asked her when she was hired but we know that Boaz knew this, as we will see later. This evidently had been going around the neighborhood and so all knew who she was.

Came back - This is the same word as "returned" in **Ruth 1:22**.

2: Vs. 7 -

And she said, 'Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house - καὶ εἶπεν Συλλέξω δὴ καὶ συνάξω ἐν τοῖς δράγμασιν ὀπισθεν τῶν θερίζοντων· καὶ ἦλθεν καὶ ἔστη ἀπὸ πρωῒθεν καὶ ἕως ἑσπέρας, οὐ κατέπαυσεν ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ μικρόν -

The servant continues with how his interview with Ruth went.

Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves - Even though the Law allowed her to do this she was thoughtful enough to ask permission. She didn't demand her "rights."

All we hear of today is to "demand your rights." We even do this with the Lord and we have to realize that all we have is a gracious gift of salvation from God and we need to be humble before Him.

This shows what kind of a woman Ruth was. It shows her humble nature. We can learn a lot from her.

Then too, as a foreigner, her opportunities to glean in the fields of Judea may have been severely limited.

So she came and has continued from morning until now - This reveals another quality of Ruth and that is she was a hard worker. She didn't take coffee breaks every hour.

Her dire straits demanded that she use her time wisely and get as much grain as possible for herself and Naomi. But many people who are in dire straits would rather sit at home and collect welfare checks and food stamps from the government. Ruth did not have this warped mentality.

Paul says, "If anyone does not work, neither should he eat." **II Thess. 3:10-12** Work is a very important quality.

Though she rested a little in the house - This "house" was a shelter set up in the fields for the purpose of rest and refreshment. This provision for his workers shows that Boaz was considerate of the plight of these poor people. He was not required to do this.

The LXX however adds, "And she did not rest in the field."

Several things are evident here:

1. Boaz did not prohibit any poor person from gleaning in his field. Evidently this was not the case with every landowner.
2. Ruth asked permission to glean from the overseer and took advantage of this permission by hard work.
3. Her story was well known to the overseer as well as Boaz, although this was the first time Boaz had seen her.

Some have questioned why Boaz had not gone to Naomi to try to help her in her condition before. He obviously knew that he was related to her. At least we assume this. The text is silent on this point.

2. Boaz Protects Ruth 2:8-16

2: Vs. 8 -

Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women - καὶ εἶπεν Βόος πρὸς Ρούθ Οὐκ ἤκουσας, θυγάτηρ; μὴ πορευθῆς ἐν ἀγρῷ συλλέξαι ἐτέρῳ· καὶ σὺ οὐ πορεύσῃ ἐντεῦθεν, ὥδε κολλήθητι μετὰ τῶν κορασίων μου -

Boaz now approaches Ruth and speaks to her personally for the first time. The overseer had given a good report to him of Ruth and now he purposed to talk with her himself.

You will listen, my daughter, will you not? There is an age difference between them. Boaz was probably closer in age to Naomi than Ruth. **Ruth 3:10** implies that Ruth had denied younger men to marry.

You will listen, will you not? - Boaz wants her to know that he has something very important to tell her.

Do not go to glean in another field - This is his first command. Boaz is doing something here which is unusual. He was required by the Law to let her glean in his field but by telling her not to leave, it is obvious that he is attracted to her and is intent on taking care of her. He would not normally do this with just anyone.

I'm sure he didn't advertise his fields to the poor even though he was required by law to let the poor glean. He would be very sorry to have her go to another field because he cared for her.

Partly too, it is because of his relation to Naomi that he is treating her so well because in taking care of Ruth he is taking care of Naomi also.

He is saying also that she is to remain during the months of not only barley harvest (March-April) but also of wheat harvest (June-July)

But stay close by my young women - These were women that Boaz had hired to follow the reapers and to bind up the sheaves (the bundles of grain) after they were cut.

Normally, the gleaners would come in after the reapers were through, but Boaz wanted Ruth to be involved in the harvest and not just to glean. Notice that now they are involved in the barley harvest.

Barley - This was the universal food for horses, mules and donkeys. **I Kings 4:28** Oats were practically unknown. Barley was used for bread among the very poor. **II Kings 4:42**

You will remember that it was five barley loaves and two fish with which Jesus fed the 5,000. **John 6:9, 13**

There were several varieties of barley that were grown.

1. 2 rowed variety
2. 4 rowed variety
3. 6 rowed variety which are depicted on Egyptian monuments.

Barley was sown in October-November after the "early rain." It is like winter wheat which is sown in the fall and dies down during the winter and sprouts again in Spring and harvested in the Summer. In the harvest, the grain was cut with a sickle. **Deut. 16:9**

The reapers lived on parched grain and vinegar. **Ruth 2:14** When cut, it was gathered in the arms, bound in sheaves and laid in heaps to be threshed.

This was the job of these young women. Boaz wanted Ruth to be a part of them and help with their job.

Threshing floors were placed in an open area usually elevated. Threshing was done by oxen or cattle driven over the grain to tread out the grain with their hoofs. **Hosea 10:11**

Simple instruments were also used for this. They were made of either planks with stones or bits of iron fastened to the lower surface to make it rough and made heavy by some weight on it.

Small wagons with low cylindrical wheels like saws were used. **Isa. 28:27a** In threshing small quantities of grain or for tender cereals, flails were used. **Isa. 28:27b**

Winnowing was done with a broad shovel or wooden fork with bent prongs. The chaff, grain and straw was thrown against the wind so that the chaff might be blown away. **Ps. 1:4**

This was usually done in the evening when there was generally a breeze. **Ruth 3:2** The chaff and stubble were burned. **Isa. 5:24a; Mt. 3:12** The grain was then sifted. **Amos 9:9**

2: Vs. 9 -

Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn - οἱ ὀφθαλμοί σου εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν οὗ ἔαν θερίζωσιν, καὶ πορεύσῃ κατόπισθεν αὐτῶν· ἰδοὺ ἐνετειλάμην τοῖς παιδαρίοις τοῦ μὴ ἅψασθαί σου· καὶ ὃ τι διψήσεις, καὶ πορευθήσῃ εἰς τὰ σκεύη καὶ πίεσαι ὅθεν ἂν ὑδρεύωνται τὰ παιδάρια -

Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them - This was his second command. Watch what the young women do and do like them.

Reap - These young women were considered in the class of reapers.

Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? - Boaz had commanded the young men not to do you any harm. This was evidently a problem. Because she was a foreigner, she would be open to insults. The young men would fraternize with the young women and bother them. This would not happen in Boaz's field. This command was carried out in **Ruth 2:15**.

This behavior was expressly forbidden by God. **Ex. 22:21; 23:9**

And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn - He would provide for her physical needs also. This was precious water which had to be brought from the well.

This was definitely not the prerogative of gleaners. He was putting her in a higher class than just a gleaner. It was equivalent to being put on his payroll.

Her needs were to be provided for. This was over and above what the Law required.

2: Vs. 10 -

So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner? - καὶ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον αὐτῆς καὶ προσεκύνησεν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν Τί ὅτι εὗρον χάριν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς σου τοῦ ἐπιγνῶναί με, καὶ ἐγὼ εἰμι ξένη; -

So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground - This was Ruth's reaction to Boaz's statement to her. This was the typical means of showing respect. **I Sam. 25:23** (Abigail to David); **II Sam. 1:2** (man to David).

Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me - To look at with sympathy or care, to receive a person kindly. **Ruth 2:2** (Ruth to Naomi) **13** (Ruth to Boaz).

Favor - This comes from a root meaning grace. **Gen. 6:8**

This was a legitimate question. Naomi had told her what to expect when she came with her to Judah. Orpah, realizing this, had not come. She had stayed in Moab. But Ruth did come, fully knowing this.

Ruth was not expecting anyone to notice her. Mary was also highly favored. **Lk. 1:28-30** We could translate this: "Why have I found grace in your eyes?"

Grace - God giving us what we don't deserve. Grace is unmerited favor. **Eph. 2:8-9**

Mercy - God not giving us what we do deserve.

Ruth had expected the opposite. She was a recipient of grace and was grateful for it.

Since I am a foreigner - A foreigner from Moab. She expected this kind of treatment. This was what Naomi had told her to expect. But she did wonder why.

It is interesting to observe that Boaz was in actuality doing exactly what the Lord had told Israel to do.

Deut. 10:17-19

2: Vs. 11 -

And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before - καὶ ἀπεκρίθη Βόος καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ Ἀπαγγελία ἀπηγγέλη μοι ὅσα πεποίηκας μετὰ τῆς πενθερᾶς σου μετὰ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν τὸν ἄνδρα σου, καὶ πῶς κατέλιπες τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου καὶ τὴν γῆν γενέσεώς σου, καὶ ἐπορεύθης πρὸς λαὸν ὃν οὐκ ἤδεις ἐχθὲς καὶ τρίτης -

Boaz replies to Ruth.

It has been fully reported to me - His servant had told Boaz some information about Ruth, but I am guessing that he had heard all about her before this. What had been reported to him?

All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband - Boaz had not gotten this information from Ruth but from those in Bethlehem who had met Naomi and Ruth when they arrived. Ruth 1:19-22

Death of your husband - Ruth didn't feel her obligation to the family ceased when her husband was dead. She took care of Naomi just like Mahlon would have done if he was still alive. This also lets us know that Boaz knew that Ruth was unmarried.

How you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth - We get from this that Ruth's father and mother were still alive. This sounds like the words of God to Abram in **Gen. 12:1**.

And have come to a people whom you did not know before - This is reminiscent of Ruth's words to Naomi in **Ruth 1:16**. Ruth had to have had a great love for the Lord to do what she did.

This also shows that Ruth already had a good reputation among the people of Bethlehem even though she was a foreigner. When people look at us, do we have a good reputation, or do they see us as hypocrites?

2: Vs. 12 -

The LORD (YAHWEH) repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim) of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge – ἀποτίσαι Κύριος τὴν ἐργασίαν σου· γένοιτο ὁ μισθός σου πλήρης παρὰ Κυρίου θεοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, πρὸς ὃν ἦλθες πεποιθέναί ὑπὸ τὰς πτέρυγας αὐτοῦ -

In these words of Boaz, we see the genuine piety of a true Israelite.

The LORD - Yahweh, the covenant-keeping God of Israel.

Repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel - Boaz says that this is a remarkable thing that Ruth has done and she should be repaid by the LORD for it. Our LORD is a rewarding God. The same is true in the NT as well. The LORD will reward us for our service for Him in this life. **II Cor. 5:10** and many other Scriptures.

Boaz was doing his part in providing for her but more was needed. The LORD should also provide for her.

Ruth, in her humility was not serving to get rewards and Boaz recognized this but said that she should be rewarded for it because it was so unusual. **Heb. 6:10** God recognizes our work for Him.

LORD God of Israel - Yahweh, the Elohim of Israel.

Under whose wings you have come for refuge - **Deut. 32:11** (eagle), **Mt. 23:37** (hen).

This figure is called a zoomorphism, comparing some aspect of an animal to God.

Ruth was trusting in God's protection. Her whole existence was given over to the Lord for His protection.

I'm sure when Naomi had told Ruth to go back to Moab she was thinking that she would not be able to protect her in Judah. Here Boaz sees through it and realizes that Ruth is depending on the Lord for her protection and not on Naomi or anyone else.

2: Vs. 13 -

Then she said, "Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants - ἡ δὲ εἶπεν Εὐροίμη χάριν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς σου, κύριε, ὅτι παρεκάλεσάς με, καὶ ὅτι ἐλάλησας ἐπὶ καρδίαν τῆς δούλης σου, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἔσομαι ὡς μία τῶν παιδισκῶν σου -

Then she said - Ruth answers Boaz in humility. His words could have made her proud. Ruth could understand his kindness to his servant girls but his kindness to her who was a foreigner was pure grace.

Let me find favor in your sight - These are the same words as in verse 10. Verse 10 is a question, here it is a statement. It is a present tense. "May I continue to find favor."

Favor - In the LXX this is the Greek word **χάρις**, "grace," something unmerited, not worthy of. Boaz did not have to treat her like this. She had found favor by:

1. **For you have comforted me** - Naomi had no words of comfort and encouragement but here Boaz comforts her with his words. She hadn't expected any comfort.

2. **And have spoken kindly to your maidservant** - He had used kind words to go to her very heart. "What you said to me went straight to my heart and made my heart warm." She hadn't expected kind words.

3. **Though I am not like one of your maidservants** - Boaz was putting Ruth on a par with his servant girls where Ruth did not believe she belonged. He was treating her like one of his hired servants, which was not the case at all. She was only a foreign gleaner there by the grace of Boaz and ultimately of God.

She regarded herself as inferior to his servant girls, possibly because of her poverty, her Gentile nationality and her heathen background. His kindness to the others was understandable. His kindness to her was pure grace.

This was what made Ruth stand out from his servant girls. She was not demanding her rights but was humble and submissive through her relationship to him.

This should be our attitude as well. We should realize that all we are and have is by the grace of God to us. We are not worthy of any of His benefits. **Isa. 64:6**

Our attitude toward others should also be one of humility. **Phil. 2:3-4** I am reminded of our Lord's instruction in **Lk. 14:7-11**

2: Vs. 14 -

Now Boaz said to her at mealtime, "Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her; and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back - καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ Βόος Ἡδὴ ὥρα τοῦ φαγεῖν, πρόσελθε ὧδε καὶ φάγεσαι τῶν ἄρτων, καὶ βάψεις τὸν ψωμόν σου τῷ ὄξει. καὶ ἐκάθισεν Ῥοὺθ ἐκ πλαγίων τῶν θεριζόντων· καὶ ἐβούνισεν αὐτῇ Βόος ἄλφιτον, καὶ ἔφαγεν καὶ ἐνεπλήσθη καὶ κατέλιπεν -

Boaz invites Ruth to lunch. He is quite taken with Ruth.

All that Ruth requested and expected was to glean, nothing more. But here she has not only received comforting words by Boaz but is invited to share in the meal that was reserved for the hired hands only. This was another example of grace shown to Ruth.

This also showed that Boaz was generous with his provisions. One writes: "He had a large estate and a large heart. He truly enjoyed the liberalities of Providence, because he took pleasure in distributing what God had given him."

Notice also that Boaz was not too proud to eat with his hired hands. This showed his humbleness as well.

We too should be willing to distribute what God has given us. As members of the body of Christ we, of all people, should be generous to all, especially to others in the body of Christ. **Gal. 6:9-10**

Bread and vinegar - This gives us insight into the food and drink of that day.

Bread - Probably barley bread or it could have been wheat bread.

Vinegar - "Chomez." A sour beverage composed of vinegar mixed with oil. It is still a favorite in the Middle East.

Parched grain - This is probably grains of barley, which is still eaten by harvesters on the harvest field.

One person describes what he encountered in the harvest fields of Israel in modern times. "In one field nearly 200 reapers and gleaners were at work, the latter being nearly as numerous as the former. A few were taking their refreshment, and offered us some of their 'parched corn' (grain). In the season of harvest, the grains of wheat not yet fully dry and hard are roasted in a pan or on an iron plate and constituted a very palatable article of food; this is eaten along with bread or instead of it." **Lev. 2:14-15** (This was the grain offering to the Lord, grain roasted on the fire).

And she ate and was satisfied - Her hunger was satisfied.

And kept some back - Boaz was so generous that she had some left over and kept it for Naomi. Cf. **Ruth 2:18**. Again we see the unselfishness of Ruth, always thinking of providing for Naomi. Ruth was quite a woman!

2: Vs. 15 -

And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her - καὶ ἀνέστη τοῦ συλλέγειν. καὶ ἐνετείλατο Βόος τοῖς παιδαρίοις αὐτοῦ λέγων Καὶ γε ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν δραγμάτων συλλεγέτω, καὶ μὴ καταισχύνητε αὐτήν -

And when she rose up to glean - After the meal was over, she went back to work. As if all that Boaz had done up until now wasn't enough, he provides for her even further.

Let her glean even among the sheaves - Normally the gleaners took only the grain that had not been bound in sheaves.

Not only was she able to glean after what the reapers had cut and left, they were to allow her to go even into the standing grain and in effect be included with the harvesters and she was to be able to keep what she had harvested.

Do not reproach her - Don't rebuke her. Do her no injury. The word "reproach" means to humiliate, treat shamefully. **I Sam. 20:34**

You let her go where she will and do not hinder her at all. This, of course, was over and above what the law required of a landowner.

2: Vs. 16 -

Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her - καὶ βαστάζοντες βαστάξατε αὐτῇ, καὶ γε παραβάλλοντες παραβαλεῖτε αὐτῇ ἐκ τῶν βεβουνισμένων· καὶ φάγεται καὶ συλλέξει, καὶ οὐκ ἐπιτιμήσετε αὐτῇ -

Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean - As if that weren't enough, he told his men to let some of the full grain stalks fall behind so that she could pick them up.

If they would have done this without his permission it would have been dishonest. They would have been robbing Boaz. Because he commanded them to do this, it would have been dishonest *not* to have done it.'

And do not rebuke her - This is a different word than verse 15. It is a more intensive and violent word. It means "to cry out against."

Boaz knew that landowners many times were held responsible for the conduct of the men under them.

Have you detected here that Boaz is not just being nice to this girl. There is more going on than just that. There is too much here that is more than just consideration or coincidence.

She really stands out to him in every way and as we will see later, he has plans for her that is more than just gleaning in his field.

Ruth has a good reputation and is humble about everything. That is not lost on Boaz and he has a vital interest in her.

7. Boaz Provides for Ruth 2:17-23

Boaz not only meets Ruth and protects Ruth but now he also provides for Ruth.

2: Vs. 17 -

So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley - καὶ συνέλεξεν ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ ἕως ἑσπέρας, καὶ ἐράβδισεν ἃ συνέλεξεν, καὶ ἐγενήθη ὡς οἰφὶ κριθῶν -

So she gleaned in the field until evening - Ruth was a hard worker. She worked a full day.

And beat out what she had gleaned - When a small amount of grain was needed, it was threshed out by means of a stick. So this is what Ruth did.

It was about an ephah of barley - An "ephah" is a little over a half bushel, which is about 25-30 pounds. This would last Ruth and Naomi about 5 days. This was a very generous amount for a day's work.

2: Vs. 18 -

Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her what she had kept back after she had been satisfied - Καὶ ἦρεν καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὴν πόλιν· καὶ εἶδεν ἡ πενθερὰ αὐτῆς ἃ συνέλεξεν, καὶ ἐξενέγκασα Ῥοῦθ ἔδωκεν αὐτῇ ἃ κατέλιπεν ἐξ ὧν ἐνεπλήσθη -

Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned - Naomi was no doubt surprised at how much grain Ruth brought home in one day and realized that God through someone was abundantly providing for them.

The normal amount that one got for gleaned was for one day. Ruth's gleaned brought enough for five days.

So she brought out and gave to her what she had kept back after she had been satisfied -

Kept back - She brought back not only what she had gleaned but also the left-overs from the meal that Boaz had supplied her. Cf. vs. 14.

2: Vs. 19 -

And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz - καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ ἡ πενθερὰ αὐτῆς Ποῦ συνέλεξας σήμερον καὶ ποῦ ἐποίησας; εἶπεν ὁ ἐπιγνούς σε εὐλογημένος. καὶ ἀνήγγειλεν Ῥοῦθ τῇ πενθερᾷ αὐτῆς ποῦ ἐποίησεν, καὶ εἶπεν Τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ ἀνδρὸς μεθ' οὗ ἐποίησα σήμερον Βόος -

And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? - Naomi was so surprised at how much barley she had gleaned that she asked Ruth where she had gleaned and where had she worked. "Where in the world could you have worked and got this much barley? This is unheard of."

Blessed be the one who took notice of you -

Blessed - "May he be prospered or favored."

Took notice - Cf. **Ruth 2:10**. This is the same word here. This is to regard with personal interest. Boaz had taken notice of Ruth, poor and foreign though she was. **Ps. 41:1**

2: Vs. 20 -

Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!" And Naomi said to her, "This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives - καὶ εἶπεν Νωεμὲν τῇ νύμφῃ αὐτῆς Εὐλογητός ἐστιν τῷ κυρίῳ, ὅτι οὐκ ἐνκατέλιπεν τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ζώντων καὶ μετὰ τῶν τεθνηκότων. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ Νωεμὲν Ἐγγίζει ἡμῖν ὁ ἀνὴρ, ἐκ τῶν ἀγχιστευόντων ἡμᾶς ἐστιν -

Blessed be he of the LORD - This is the same word as vs. 19.

Who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead -

Kindness - This is the famous word "Hesed" in the OT which means God's unfailing love and kindness to His people. **Ruth 3:10**

To the living and the dead - Boaz is taking care of the living (Ruth and Naomi) as well as the dead in the sense that he is providing for them just as Elimelech and Mahlon would have done if they were living. So he was honoring the dead as well.

This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives - Literally it says: "This man stands close to us, he is the one redeeming us."

Naomi immediately recognized that Ruth's going to Boaz's field was no accident.

Close relatives - One standing close, by relationship. It is the Hebrew word *goel*, "redeemer." From **Ruth 1:1-3** we learned that Boaz was a close relation to Elimelech, Naomi's husband. Literally it says he is "the one redeeming us." This is the first time "redeem" is used in Ruth but we will see it many times.

Redeem - Hebrew *go'el*. It means a redeemer, one who can redeem, ransom, release, to fulfill the duties of relationship. The main idea is that of buying back something. Redemption has many facets:

1. Redemption in regard to the land. When the Israelites returned from Egypt to Israel under Joshua and it was conquered, the land was divided up into 12 parts for the 12 tribes of Israel. Each family in each tribe had a particular plot of land in that section.

If he became poor or had several crop failures, he might have to sell off part or all of his land to make ends meet. This was probably what happened to Elimelech when he left Israel for Moab.

The person who bought the land could only take a 50 year mortgage because every 50 years (the Year of Jubilee) all the land goes back to the original owner. This law kept the land in the family.

But what happens if he is middle age. He will be dead before 50 years is up and will never get his land back. If he dies, then it goes back to his son.

Let's suppose he has a rich relative who cares for him. He can come in and pay off the mortgage or whatever is left until the year of Jubilee and restore it to the owner before the year of Jubilee. All of this is recorded in **Lev. 25:23-28**.

2. Redemption in regard to persons. A man may not only have lost his property, but in order to feed his family, he sells himself into slavery. This too will last only until the Year of Jubilee. But 50 years is a long time to be in slavery.

Perhaps he has a relative who doesn't like it that his relation is living in slavery and he pays to get him out before the Year of Jubilee. He can do this and so he buys him out or redeems him. **Lev. 25:47-55**

3. Redemption in regard to widows. This is the law of Levirate Marriage. We have already discussed this in regard to Ruth in chapter 1. **Deut 25:5-10**

4. Redemption in regard to us under grace. Christ acts as our Kinsman-Redeemer. He paid the ransom and bought us out of the slave market of sin. We were slaves to sin but He paid the price of our redemption and now we are free to serve Him. **Eph. 1:7**

This man is a relation of ours - Literally it says, "He is a near-kinsman." Boaz was in the position to act as a redeemer of Ruth and Naomi, to free them from their situation.

Boaz was a close relation but more than that he was a kinsman who could fulfill the Levirate Law. He was not a brother to Mahlon, but he was a close relative and could act as a *levir* (Latin term for brother-in-law) if he so desired.

As we will see in Ruth 3:12, there was a closer relative than Boaz so there is still an obstacle in the way. We won't worry about that until we get there.

I detect a note of joy in Naomi's remarks about Boaz. Do you see a change in Naomi's bearing since 1:20-21? Before she is depressed but here there is a spark of life and hope after all.

2: Vs. 21 -

Ruth the Moabitess said, "He also said to me, 'You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest - καὶ εἶπεν Ῥοῦθ πρὸς τὴν πενθερὰν αὐτῆς Καί γε ὅτι εἶπεν πρὸς μέ Μετὰ τῶν παιδαρίων μου κολλήθητι ἕως ἂν τελέσωσιν ὅλον τὸν ἀμητὸν ὃς ὑπάρχει μοι -

Ruth the Moabitess - The writer is still reminding us of Ruth's background but in spite of it God was using her and providing for her. Even though she was from Moab, her faith was in the God of Israel.

You stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest -

Stay close - This means "to cling to, to stick like glue. **Gen. 2:24** Cf. **Ruth 2:8** and **Ruth 1:14**. To stay in close proximity.

Young men - Cf. **Ruth 2:8**. "Young women" is used. It is the same root word but here the word is a more comprehensive gender, meaning both male and female.

2: Vs. 22 -

And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "*It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field* - καὶ εἶπεν Νωεμὶν πρὸς Ροῦθ τὴν νόμφην αὐτῆς Ἀγαθόν, θυγάτηρ, ὅτι ἐπορεύθης μετὰ τῶν κορασίων αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἀπαντήσονται σοι ἐν ἄγρῳ ἑτέρῳ -

Naomi was quite satisfied with this arrangement and told Ruth to do just as Boaz said.

Meet - Literally, "that they do not fall upon you." To "fall upon" a person is to smite and ill-treat them. This was a reminder of the low morals of people during this time of the judges. Naomi wanted Ruth to know that not every field would be like Boaz's.

She is basically saying: "If Boaz desires to treat you kindly, do not go elsewhere. Accept his generosity and remain with his maidens."

2: Vs. 23 -

So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law - καὶ προσεκολλήθη Ροῦθ τοῖς κορασίοις Βόος συλλέγειν ἕως οὗ συνετέλεσεν τὸν θερισμὸν τῶν κριθῶν καὶ τῶν πυρῶν. καὶ ἐκάθισεν μετὰ τῆς πενθερᾶς αὐτῆς -

Ruth followed her mother-in-law's advice and did as Boaz said.

End of barley harvest and wheat harvest - Barley harvest is in March and April and wheat harvest is in June and July. So she would be working from March-July, about 5 months. See chart, "Calendar of Israel."

She dwelt with her mother-in-law - It is obvious that they got along well. They had come a long ways together. There was a mutual respect and love between them.

However, there is an element of tension that is felt here. What will happen once the harvests are over? What will they do then?

Part Two: Ruth's Love is Rewarded 3:1-4:22

I. Ruth's Request of Redemption by Boaz 3:1-18

A. Naomi Seeks Redemption for Ruth 3:1-5

As the events of chapter two have taken place, i.e. Ruth going to work in Boaz's field, his care and provision for her through not only the barley harvest but also the wheat harvest, Naomi has observed all of these things and she has concluded that there was more going on that met the eye.

She has seen all of these things and has decided that it is time for her to step in and suggest the next natural step and realizes that Boaz is also ready for such a step. Ruth had not as yet done anything about this.

3: Vs. 1 -

Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? - Εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῇ Νωεμὶν ἡ πενθερὰ αὐτῆς Θυγάτηρ, οὐ μὴ ζητήσω σοι ἀνάπαισιν ἵνα εὖ γένηταί σοι; -

Shall I not seek security for you? - It is translated here as a question, but the words used suggest undoubted certainty. She is so sure that what she is about to suggest will undoubtedly come to pass. The idea is: "It is my duty to seek security for you."

Security - It is actually the word "rest," a peaceful and well-secured life. This word was used in **Ruth 1:9** where it signified marriage as a secure condition. It means the same thing here.

What Naomi is saying to Ruth is this: "Shall I not seek marriage for you?" Ruth had no mother in Judah so Naomi takes her place. In Ruth 1:9 she is saying that security would come by being married in the land of Moab but here it would be accomplished by being married to Boaz in Judah.

It was customary for Hebrew parents to arrange marriages for their children. She is acting as a matchmaker. Remember Yenta the Matchmaker in Fiddler on the Roof. It is the same here.

Naomi apparently thought that Boaz was the nearest kinsman, not knowing that there was a nearer one.

That it may be well with you - "It will be good for you, Ruth." "In fact, it will be the best thing that ever happened to you." **Gen. 2:18** Naomi only wanted good for Ruth. **Ruth 2:22**

3: Vs. 2 -

Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, *is he not our relative?* In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor - καὶ νῦν οὐχὶ Βόος γνώριμος ἡμῶν, οὗ ἦς μετὰ τῶν κορασίων αὐτοῦ; ἰδοὺ αὐτὸς λικμᾷ τὸν ἄλωνα τῶν κριθῶν ταύτη τῇ νυκτί -

Naomi now be - gins to tell Ruth how they will carry this out.

Relative - This is not the word for "redeemer" as in "kinsman-redeemer."

He is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor - The people of Bethlehem took turns using the threshing floor. This winnowing usually took place between 4 PM till after sunset.

Threshing floor - There are certain things to notice about threshing floors in that day.

1. It was located at the top of a hill so there would be more wind.
2. The soil was packed down to a hard smooth surface and was circular about 50 feet in diameter with rocks placed around it.
3. In the late afternoon a breeze would come up and would blow until around sundown or even until midnight.
4. The grain and chaff were all mixed together, having been threshed by oxen or by sledges drawn over them. This would be thrown up into the air and the chaff would be blown away by the wind and the grain would fall down onto the threshing floor.
5. As long as the wind blew they would work. Then when the wind died down they would have a feast.
6. Many people would be there with their children.
7. After the feast the men would sleep around the grain in a circular area with their feet out as spokes and their heads toward the heaps of grain. This protected the grain from thieves.

3: Vs. 3 -

Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your *best* garment and go down to the threshing floor; *but* do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking - σὺ δὲ λούση καὶ ἀλείψῃ καὶ περιθήσεις τὸν ἱματισμόν σου ἐπὶ σέ, καὶ ἀναβήσῃ ἐπὶ τὸν ἄλω· μὴ γνωρισθῇς τῷ ἀνδρὶ ἕως οὗ συντελέσαι αὐτὸν πιεῖν καὶ φαγεῖν -

Naomi begins to explain in great detail what she wants Ruth to do.

Wash yourself - To bathe, clean oneself. The climate was hot and therefore one must be bathed. This word was used of Bathsheba washing herself when David saw her. **II Sam. 11:2**

Anoint yourself - This word is always used of anointing the human body after a bath. **II Sam. 12:20** (Used of David after his son died). It is also used of Aaron and his sons using mixed anointing oils in their service in the Tabernacle. Cf. **II Cor. 2:14-16**

It is also used of the putting on of perfume. Dr. McGee said that the name of this perfume was "Midnight in Moab."

Put on your best garment - This was a large outer garment to keep warm during the night. Even though it was hot during the day, the nights were cold. This was also used to keep her identity secret.

Go down to the threshing floor - Bethlehem was on a high hill and the threshing floor was lower than Bethlehem but was still elevated from the rest of the country.

Do not make yourself known to the man - Don't make yourself known to Boaz in the sense of him being able to recognize you. You are not to let him know you are there.

Until he has finished eating and drinking - I.e. until the feast is over that I mentioned before. Several of the feasts of Israel had to do with the threshing floor; the feast of firstfruits and the feast of Pentecost were two. Pentecost concluded the feast of the later grains.

3: Vs. 4 -

Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do - καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῷ κοιμηθῆναι αὐτὸν καὶ γνώσῃ τὸν τόπον ὅπου κοιμᾶται ἐκεῖ, καὶ ἐλεύσῃ καὶ ἀποκαλύψεις τὰ πρὸς ποδῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ κοιμηθήσῃ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἀπαγγελεῖ σοι ἃ ποιήσεις -

When he lies down - To sleep, to protect the grain from thieves.

You shall notice the place where he lies - This was done so she could find him after dark and get the right man. To not do so would be disastrous.

You shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down - She was to go after he had lain down and then lift up the covering of his feet and lie down beside him and pull his garment over her. Edward Hindson explains: "The term *uncover his feet* refers to a recognized . . . custom in which the girl would slightly pull back the edge of the man's robe and then request him to spread the robe (lit., *wing*) over her. The implication of this meant that she was proposing marriage to him and asking that she be taken into his family as his wife, and thus, come under his protection. The Targum recognized this as a claim to espousal. **Ezek. 16:8** (The Lord speaking to Israel); **Deut. 22:30**"

Some have criticized Ruth for this and Naomi for suggesting it but nothing is immoral about this. It was bold but not immoral. This was not done in private. There were lots of people around because of the situation, the feasting and protecting the grain, etc.

He will tell you what you should do - "He," (Boaz) is emphasized. "You will have done your part, Ruth, now Boaz will take it from there." As we would say "The ball is in his court now." The implication is clear that Ruth is to do what Boaz asked her to do.

3: Vs. 5 -

And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do - εἶπεν δὲ Ροῦθ πρὸς Πάντα ὅσα ἐν εἰρήῃ ποιήσω -

Ruth agreed to do all that Naomi said to her. What exactly is happening here? It all goes back to the law of levirate marriage. In actuality, Ruth is claiming Boaz as her kinsman-redeemer. There are several things to consider:

1. Ruth is entitled to and has a right to claim Boaz as her kinsman-redeemer.
2. Ruth *must* claim him. She must take the initiative. In **Deut. 25:5-10** the woman is the one taking the initiative.
3. Boaz obviously *wants* to be her kinsman-redeemer. He is interested in her and he has shown that, ever since he met her in his field.

Facts about the kinsman-redeemer:

1. It involved both person and inheritance. They came as a package deal. You couldn't have one without the other. As we will see in chapter 4, Boaz redeemed the parcel of land and restored it to Naomi and also removed all of the obstacles that would permit him to marry Ruth.
2. The redeemer had to be a relative. **Lev. 25:48b-49**
3. The redeemer had to be able to redeem. The law required the redemption of the property and also the obligation to raise up seed to the deceased. He was not only to buy back the property but also to take Ruth as his wife that she might bear children.
4. The kinsman-redeemer had to pay the price in full. **Lev. 25:27** The full price was to be paid. **Lev. 25:25** Boaz was to redeem the land by his payment to whoever bought it from Elimelech and also to obey the law of levirate marriage by marrying Ruth.

If he didn't redeem the land it would go back to them at the Year of Jubilee, but this might have been a long time off, plus Boaz was interested in marrying Ruth *now*. For this reason, we must understand the Year of Jubilee.

I. Meaning. It comes from the Hebrew which means the shophar or rams horn trumpet used by the Jews. It is mentioned in Leviticus 25 and 27. From the blast of this trumpet on the Day of Atonement, the Year of Jubilee was to begin.

II. Time. After the lapse of seven Sabbaths, $7 \times 7 = 49$ years, the trumpet was to sound bringing in the 50th year.

III. Observance. It was to become obligatory to the Israelites after they had taken possession of the land and had cultivated the soil for 49 years. This would have been the 64th year after they came into the land under Joshua. It took them 7 years to conquer the land and 7 years to distribute it among the tribes.

IV. Laws of Jubilee

1. Rest for the soil. **Lev. 25:11** The principle behind this was that God was the owner of the land of Israel and the Israelites were only to take care of it. **Lev. 25:23** This gift of the land was rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant. **Gen. 15:7**

The Israelites were fearful because there would be two successive years of neither planting nor harvesting his crops. **Lev. 25:20** God promised them an abundant harvest in the sixth year which would carry them over until the harvest of the ninth year comes in. **Lev. 25:21-22** The purpose of this was to give the people rest also. They wouldn't have to sow nor reap.

It is interesting to me that the Lord promised prosperity in the land if they were obedient to Him. They would have crops and plenty of food. They would be a blessed people.

They would be well taken care of if they would only obey Him. You would think this would be a simple thing. But we have to remember that the heart is sinful. **Isa. 64:6** (The original "Gone With the Wind.") **Jer. 17:9**

They disobeyed the Lord and the Lord punished them. **Lev. 26:21-24** One of the way they disobeyed Him was not observing the Sabbath of years. Every 7th year the land was to lie fallow. This was not observed so the Lord sent them into captivity.

The Lord told them this would happen. **Lev. 26:25-33** Then the land had forced rest when they were out of the land in captivity. **Lev. 26:34-35**

Jeremiah prophesied this captivity. **Jer. 29:10** In **II Chron. 36:14-21**, not observing the Sabbatic year was the reason for the captivity.

2. Return of property. All property which had been sold to others was to be returned to its original owner. This insured that the land would always stay in a certain tribe and even in a certain family.

Here is how it would work:

Let's say the land was worth \$500.

\$500 divided by 50 = \$10 a year.

If he buys the land after 10 years:

10 years x \$10 a year = \$100

\$500 - \$100 = \$400 to pay.

If he redeems the land after 40 years:

40 x \$10 a year = \$400

\$500 - \$400 = \$100 to pay.

3. All slaves would be freed. **Lev 25:40-41** Anyone who sold himself to another would be freed in the 50th year.

I hope this helps us to understand a little of the background of what is happening here in Ruth.

One aspect of this was the Law of the Kinsman-Redeemer. The Book of Ruth is the only place in the Bible where this law is illustrated and therefore it is very important. Property was redeemed, slaves were redeemed and Ruth was redeemed.

B. Ruth Obeys Naomi 3:6-9

3: Vs. 6 -

So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her - Καὶ κατέβη εἰς τὸν ἄλω, καὶ ἐποίησεν κατὰ πάντα ὅσα ἐνετείλατο αὐτῇ ἡ πενθερὰ αὐτῆς

-

There is no indication that Ruth argued with Naomi about this but she is obedient to her in all she told her, down to the minutest detail. The preparation had been made, now the plan had to be carried out.

3: Vs. 7 -

And after Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down - καὶ ἔφαγεν Βόος καὶ ἠγαθύνθη ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἦλθεν κοιμηθῆναι ἐν μερίδι τῆς στοιβῆς· ἡ δὲ ἦλθεν κρυφῇ καὶ ἀπεκάλυψεν τὰ πρὸς ποδῶν αὐτοῦ -

Eaten and drunk - After the feasting was over that was a part of the harvest.

His heart was cheerful - Literally "good." He was feeling good. He could have been feeling good for a lot of reasons.

Notice that it doesn't say that he was drunk. We know he wasn't from the way he addresses Ruth and what he says later.

This is not a verse to use to show it is alright to drink socially. There is many a person who has thought it was alright and he has become addicted to alcohol. To drink "moderately" or "responsibly" is what the liquor companies are pushing because they know that once you drink a little, then it is easier to drink more and more and before you know it, you are an alcoholic.

Before Christians decide whether to drink wine, they should ask themselves the following questions:

1. Am I aware that in the OT, when wine was approved it was unfermented grape juice, and when it was condemned, it was fermented?
2. Am I aware that "strong drink" in the Bible which corresponds to liquor and wine today was condemned by God?
3. Am I aware that in NT times wine was mixed with water and therefore not the same as wine today?
4. Am I aware of the serious consequences of drinking wine with its high alcoholic content?
5. Am I aware that my drinking liquor may lead others to sin? **Phil. 2:4; Rom. 14:21; I Cor. 10:32**
6. Can I drink liquor to the glory of God? **I Cor. 10:31**

He went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain - He was doing exactly what Naomi said he would.

She came softly - Quietly. She didn't want to attract attention to herself by making noise.

Uncovered his feet - Some have thought that she uncovered his feet and left them uncovered and that is why he woke up later on because he was cold and covered herself with his covering. Again, nothing immoral was done here.

3: Vs. 8 -

Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet - ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ μεσονυκτίῳ καὶ ἐξέστη ὁ ἀνὴρ καὶ ἐταράχθη, καὶ ἰδοὺ γυνὴ κοιμᾶται πρὸς ποδῶν αὐτοῦ -

Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself - For some reason, at midnight (maybe he smelled her "Midnight in Moab" perfume) Boaz woke up and was startled to find a woman at his feet.

A woman was lying at his feet - That would startle him! She was "lying at his feet" not for any immoral purpose but for a purpose that we will see later.

3: Vs. 9 -

And he said, "Who are you?" So she answered, "I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative - εἶπεν δὲ Τίς εἶ σύ; ἡ δὲ εἶπεν Ἐγὼ εἰμι Ῥοῦθ ἡ δούλη σου, καὶ περιβαλεῖς τὸ πτερύγιόν σου ἐπὶ τὴν δούλην σου, ὅτι ἀγγιστεὺς εἶ σύ -

And he said, "Who are you?" - He asks who she was because he wasn't expecting a woman at his feet in the first place, and also that he didn't recognize her because of the darkness.

I am Ruth, your maidservant - Notice that Ruth responds with humility. This is not the same word as in **Ruth 2:13**. There it is a servant who is a member of the family.

We said earlier that these girls were on Boaz's payroll and now we learn that quite possibly they were members of his own household as servants. This would be another indication of Boaz's wealth. Here it is the word for "slave."

Take your maidservant under your wing - Ruth gives the reason for her coming. She was taking the initiative as the law stated. She was asking that Boaz marry her under the conditions of the levirate marriage arrangement.

Under your wing - Lit. "Spread your garment over me." This signified his acceptance as the kinsman-redeemer. This is also the custom among the Arabs today.

It is the sign of the acceptance of the marriage proposal. **Ezek. 16:8** (Speaking of Israel).

Ruth had put herself under the wings of Yahweh in **Ruth 2:12** and now she wants to be under the wings of Boaz.

Boaz could now become Ruth's kinsman-redeemer and give her the security of marriage.

I don't imagine that Ruth got much sleep that night. She was probably lying awake wondering if Boaz would ever wake up and notice her there.

For you are a close relative - Literally, a near kinsman, a redeemer. You are my kinsman-redeemer. You are the one who can redeem me. Literally it says: "The one redeeming is you."

C. Boaz Desires to Redeem Ruth 3:10-18

Boaz is faced with a decision here. "What am I going to do? Will I marry her or not?" I'm sure he had asked himself this question many times before now.

I don't think however, that his answer was long in coming. I think he had already decided what he would do if Ruth ever approached him.

Ruth had to take the initiative in this and Boaz probably wondered if Ruth was ever going to ask him. Note too that Ruth could have made this a more open proposal.

She could have gone to Boaz before the elders in the gate but Naomi knew that there was a nearer redeemer and so she thought by going to Boaz, he could handle it in a better way because of his position in the community.

3: Vs. 10 -

Then he said, "Blessed are you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich - καὶ εἶπεν Βόος Εὐλογημένη σὺ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ, θύγατερ, ὅτι ἡγάθυνας τὸ ἐλεός σου τὸ ἔσχατον ὑπὲρ τὸ πρῶτον τὸ μὴ πορευθῆναι ὀπίσω νεανιῶν, εἴτοι πτωχὸς εἴτοι πλούσιος -

Then he said - Boaz responds and I think rather quickly. He did not make her think that she had done a wrong thing here. It was not against the custom of the day.

Blessed are you of the LORD - Boaz sees the hand of the Lord in this. Cf. **Ruth 2:20** where Naomi blesses Boaz.

My daughter - There could have been an age difference. **Ruth 2:20**

For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning -

Kindness - This is the famous Hebrew word "Hesed" which describes the unfailing lovingkindness of Jehovah for His people. She was showing the same kindness to Boaz. **Ruth 1:8; 2:20a**

End - Her proposal to him now.

Beginning - This would be her marriage to Mahlon and her loyalty to Naomi.

In that you did not go after young men, whether rich or poor - This was how she showed kindness by choosing him over young men. She could have chosen a younger man and married him but she was in love with Boaz.

Whether poor or rich - Their wealth or lack of it did not even enter into her choice of men.

3: Vs. 11 -

And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman - 11καὶ νῦν, θύγατερ, μὴ φοβοῦ· πάντα ὅσα ἐὰν εἴπῃς ποιήσω σοι· οἶδεν γὰρ πᾶσα φυλὴ λαοῦ μου ὅτι γυνὴ δυνάμεως εἶ σὺ

Do not fear - The imperative with the negative has the idea that she is to stop doing what she was doing. "Stop fearing!" "It is alright what you have done." Maybe there was something about Ruth that made Boaz think that Ruth was afraid. I think she really was.

What she had done took courage and I'm sure she was afraid. Boaz encourages her by these words.

I will do for you all that you request - Boaz got the point of all of this. What she requested was that he be her kinsman-redeemer and that he marry her. He says that he will do what she asks.

For all the people of my town (Bethlehem) know that you are a virtuous woman - A noble woman, a woman of a good reputation. **Ruth 2:11**

So they were a good match. Both of them were virtuous. **Pro. 12:4** The classic passage on a virtuous woman is Proverbs 31:10-31.

The Queen of Sheba's heart was one with Solomon when she came to see him. **1 Kings 10:2** You wonder if Solomon might not have had Ruth in mind as he penned Proverbs 31.

People of my town - The word used for "town" is "gate." Lit. it is "all the gate of my people," or "the whole of the gate of my people. In **Ruth 1:19** it says that "all the city" was excited.

The "gate" is talking about the elders who ruled the people. All of the legal matters were taken care of at the gate.

When we get to chapter 4 we will see how important the gate really was.

What Boaz is saying is that Ruth is recognized by the ruling elders of Israel as being a virtuous woman which is a kind of official recognition. Boaz saw nothing immoral with Ruth coming to him like this. It was a virtuous thing to do.

3: Vs. 12 -

Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I - καὶ ὅτι ἀληθῶς ἀγγιστεὺς ἐγὼ εἰμι· καὶ γέ ἐστιν ἀγγιστεὺς ἐγγίων ὑπὲρ ἐμέ -

It is true that I am a close relative - Or a "near kinsman." See **Ruth 3:9**. Boaz acknowledges that he is in line to be a redeemer.

However, there is a relative closer than I - There is one problem. There was one nearer than Boaz. As I said before, Boaz was considered to be only a nephew of Elimelech so evidently this "one nearer" could have been a brother.

But notice that Boaz had done his homework. He already had investigated to see if there was one nearer than he was. He was ready the minute Ruth gave him the opportunity.

3: Vs. 13 -

Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you--good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the LORD lives! Lie down until morning - ἀυλίσθητι τὴν νύκτα, καὶ ἔσται τὸ πρωὶ ἐὰν ἀγγιστεύσῃ σε, ἀγαθόν, ἀγγιστευέτω· ἐὰν δὲ μὴ βούληται ἀγγιστεῦσαί σε, ἀγγιστεύσω σε ἐγὼ, ζῇ Κύριος, σὺ εἰ Κύριος· κοιμήθητι ἕως πρωὶ -

Boaz gives Ruth further instructions.

Stay this night - He didn't want her to enter the city in the middle of the night.

If he will perform the duty of a close relative for you -- good; let him do it - Boaz would see the nearer relative and present it to him. If he will go along with this, i.e. performing the duty of a close relative (kinsman-redeemer) then this will be good. Boaz is going to do all he can to abide by Ruth's request.

Good - This would not be good for Boaz because he will lose Ruth but good in the sense that the law would have been satisfied and he would have done his duty. This is an example of the character of Boaz.

Boaz could have married Ruth outright, but if he did, the property would not have been redeemed and go to Ruth and the offspring would not inherit the property of Elimelech.

But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the LORD lives! - "If he does not want to redeem you then I will redeem you as you have requested."

"I" is emphasized here. "If he won't do it, then I will do it."

Lie down until morning - "Lie down now and rest, Ruth, and I will take care of everything in the morning."

I'm sure Ruth didn't sleep much more that night because she now had something else to worry about, the nearer redeemer. What if this person would agree to redeem her, then what? Again, there is another momentous decision that needs to be made.

In fact, there are many important decisions in the Book of Ruth:

1. The decision for Ruth to accompany Naomi to Bethlehem.
2. The decision to glean in Boaz's field.

3. The decision to redeem Ruth or not.

Any decision in the wrong direction would be disastrous to the will of God being done as to Christ coming through David and before that through Ruth and Boaz.

As the Lord lives - "I am going to do all I can, the Lord helping me." Boaz realized that the Lord's hand must be with him in all he does. There was no doubt as to how Boaz felt the outcome *should* be.

3: Vs. 14 -

So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, "Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor - καὶ ἐκοιμήθη πρὸς ποδῶν αὐτοῦ ἕως πρωῒ· ἡ δὲ ἀνέστη πρὸ τοῦ ἐπιγνῶναι ἄνδρα τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ· καὶ εἶπεν Βόος Μὴ γνωσθῇτω ὅτι ἦλθεν γυνὴ εἰς τὴν ἄλωνα -

Ruth was obedient to Boaz and did as he said.

Before one could recognize another - Literally the Hebrew says "Before men could recognize his neighbor." It was at dawn but before it was light enough to recognize another.

Do not let it be known - What Ruth had done was not wrong in itself but there was no reason to take a chance on their reputations if no one knew she had come there.

He said - I.e. Boaz. Boaz was considerate of her and didn't want her reputation tarnished. He didn't want people to misunderstand her being there.

Then too, the nearer kinsman could have been present at the threshing floor and Boaz didn't want him to know so that his prospects would not be jeopardized.

3: Vs. 15 -

Also he said, "Bring the shawl that is on you and hold it." And when she held it, he measured six ephahs of barley, and laid it on her. Then she went into the city - καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ Φέρε τὸ περίζωμα τὸ ἐπάνω σου. καὶ ἐκράτησεν αὐτό, καὶ ἐμέτρησεν ἕξ κριθῶν καὶ ἐπέθηκεν ἐπ' αὐτήν· καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὴν πόλιν -

Boaz again speaks and he is always thinking about providing for Ruth.

Bring the shawl that is on you and hold it - The "shawl" was a wide cloak that she wore around her. She was to hold it out.

He measured six ephahs of barley, and laid it on her - "Six ephahs" is six measures. The word "ephah" is in italics; it is not in the text. In **Ruth 2:17** "ephah" is in the text and it is about .65 of a bushel.

If it was 6 ephahs it would have been almost four bushels of barley, which would have been quite heavy for someone to carry.

The rabbis have thought it was the "seah" which was 1/3 of an ephah or about 10 pounds. Six ephahs would be sixty pounds. So we are not told exactly what measure it was. Probably she carried it on her head as was the custom of the day.

Another reason he gave her this grain was so that if anyone saw her, they would see her carrying grain and not think anything of it.

Then she went into the city - Ruth leaves and goes back into Bethlehem.

3: Vs. 16 -

So when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "Is that you, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her - καὶ Ροῦθ εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς τὴν πενθεράν αὐτῆς· ἡ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῇ Θύγατερ· καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος -

Ruth goes immediately to Naomi to tell her how it went.

Is that you my daughter? - It was probably still dark when Ruth returned and at first Naomi did not know who she was. It didn't take her long to know because she says "my daughter."

Another possibility would be that she probably wasn't expecting her that early. "Is this you already?"

A third possibility which I think is the best would be "How do things stand with you? Are you the future Mrs. Boaz or not?"

Or it could be: "What have you accomplished?" Did things go as I said they would? What news do you have for me?"

She told her all that the man had done for her - Notice Ruth's openness with Naomi. It is not only here but throughout the book. She never tries to hide anything from Naomi but tells her everything that Boaz had done for her.

3: Vs. 17 -

And she said, "These six *ephahs* of barley he gave me; for he said to me, 'Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law - καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ Τὰ ἕξ τῶν κριθῶν ταῦτα ἔδωκέν μοι, ὅτι εἶπεν πρὸς μέ Μὴ εἰσελθῆς κενὴ πρὸς τὴν πενθεράν σου -

Ruth displays Boaz's gift to them with the measures of barley. Again, Boaz was very generous to them as he had been all along.

By giving them this gift he was saying also that he was going to do as Ruth had requested him. He was not displeased with her for coming to the threshing floor.

Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law - This provision of barley was not only for Ruth but also for Naomi. Boaz might have realized that it had been Naomi's idea for Ruth to come.

Naomi also saw from this that Boaz would indeed take care of her in the future as well.

Empty-handed - Remember back in **Ruth 1:21** where Naomi said she came home empty. There she was empty of wealth and children but here she was being provided for by the grain and there was the hope of an heir if Ruth married Boaz.

3: Vs. 18 -

Then she said, "Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day - ἡ δὲ εἶπεν Κάθου, θύγατερ, ἕως τοῦ ἐπιγνῶναί σε πῶς οὐ πεσεῖται ῥῆμα· οὐ γὰρ μὴ ἡσυχάσῃ ὁ ἀνὴρ ἕως ἂν τελέσῃ τὸ ῥῆμα σήμερον -

Naomi gives Ruth further advice.

Sit still my daughter - "You have done all you can do, you have done your part, now it is up to Boaz to do the rest. Stay put. Stay home and stay calm. Be patient."

Until you know how the matter will turn out - Literally, "How the matter will fall." This has to do with the *lot*. When they cast the lot, it fell to the ground. That is the figure here. "There is nothing you can do now to influence it one way or the other."

What we have here is certainty and uncertainty. The certainty is that Ruth will have a husband. The uncertainty is, will it be Boaz?

I'm sure Ruth and Naomi was apprehensive about the way it would turn out but they had done all they could. They had to leave it in God's hands working through Boaz.

For the man (Boaz) will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day - Boaz will not rest, will not relax his efforts:

This day - Boaz is not going to let it drag out. Ruth has given him the ball and he is going to run with it. He would leave no loose ends.

William MacDonald gives a fitting application for this section of Ruth: "Ruth was a noble woman, intrinsically worthy of Boaz's kindnesses. But we were unworthy sinners. Yet the Lord spread His covering over us and took us as we were. He has loaded us with gifts and encouraged us with His promised return to consummate the marriage. Our salvation is settled, a finished work. But entrance into the full bliss of our union awaits the Bridegroom's return."

II. Ruth's Reward of Redemption by Boaz 4:1-22

A. Boaz Marries Ruth 4:1-12

The scene now shifts to the city gate of Bethlehem where all legal matters are taken care of. Ruth 3:18 says that Boaz will not rest and chapter 4 shows us how that is carried out. He is to deal with the obstacle of the nearer-kinsman. **Ruth 3:12**

4: Vs. 1 -

Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So Boaz said, "Come aside, friend, sit down here." So he came aside and sat down - Καὶ Βόος ἀνέβη ἐπὶ τὴν πύλιν καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐκεῖ, καὶ ἰδοὺ ὁ ἀγχιστευτὴς παρεπορεύετο ὃν εἶπεν Βόος, καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτὸν Βόος Ἐκκλίνας κάθισον ὧδε, κρύφιε· καὶ ἐξέκλινεν καὶ ἐκάθισεν -

Boaz went up to the gate - The threshing floor was below the city so Boaz "went up" to the gate.

1. The gate was the place where the courts were held. It was the courthouse. **Deut. 16:18**
2. Dignitaries were entertained at the gate. **Esther 2:19, 21**
3. Prophets gave their prophecies many times at the city gates. **Amos 5:10**

So the gate of the city was probably the most important place in the city. It was the place where everyone went in or went out. **Gen. 19:1** (Lot in the gate).

In Texas, as I'm sure it is the same in Kansas, at the county seat, the courthouse is located in the middle of the town. That is where the courts are held. In Ruth's day, it was the gate. This is where Boaz goes.

Sat down there - He was permitted to sit down in the gate because he was an important man in the town, probably an elder himself. He sat down and waited but we are not told how long.

The close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by - Finally the one man he was waiting for came by, the one who he wanted to do business with. This shows the providence of God in sending this man just at this time.

Close relative - Literally, "the kinsman-redeemer." This man was indeed the next in line.

Of whom Boaz had spoken came by - This was the one that Boaz had spoken to Ruth about. **Ruth 3:12**

Come aside, friend, sit down here - The Hebrew here is very colorful. Instead of giving the man's name, the text calls him, "so and so." The KJV translates: "Ho, such a one! Turn aside, sit down here." His anonymity was from a spiritual point of view.

Boaz obviously knew him. He could have also been an elder in the city.

So he came aside and sat down - To transact business. I'm sure the man wondered what in the world Boaz wanted with him. To sit down was to be in legal assembly.

4: Vs. 2 -

And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down - καὶ ἔλαβεν Βόος δέκα ἄνδρας ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τῆς πόλεως καὶ εἶπεν Καθίσαιτε ὧδε· καὶ ἐκάθισαν -

And he took ten men of the elders of the city - This would be the ruling body of the people. **Deut. 25:7-10** Notice how many times the elders are mentioned.

Of the elders - Or "among the elders." There were more than 10 elders. For instance, the town of Succoth had 77 elders. **Judges 8:14**

So Boaz gathers 10 men together who could transact business and hold court. Normally, for ordinary business only two or three elders were needed. But for business like transfer of property, matrimony or divorce, ten witnesses were needed. **I Kings 21:8**

These were all important men. They acted as judges and witnesses of the transaction. For instance, 10 men were required for the legality of a marriage as well as for a quorum.

In later Judaism, ten men were considered a quorum for a synagogue. So these 10 elders were representative and were obviously enough for a quorum.

Boaz wanted this to be entirely legal. He didn't want any slip-ups. **II Cor. 8:21; Rom. 12:17**

4: Vs. 3 -

Then he said to the close relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech - καὶ εἶπεν Βόος τῷ ἀγγιστεῖ Τὴν μερίδα τοῦ ἀγροῦ ἣ ἐστὶν τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἡμῶν τοῦ Ἀβειμέλεχ, ἣ δέδοται Νοεμὶν τῇ ἐπιστροφῇ ἐξ ἀγροῦ Μωάβ -

Boaz now addresses the potential redeemer. This man was really more than a "close relative" but actually the word is *go'el* or kinsman-redeemer. He proceeds with great caution. This had to be done just right, decently and in order.

Surprisingly, he begins with the piece of land, not Ruth. But property redemption was the duty of a redeemer. Here we are told a fact which we have not known before.

Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech - She evidently sold it after she came back from Moab to alleviate her and Ruth's poverty.

Some have translated this as "is selling," implying that Naomi had the land up for sale. But if this was true, why was there a need for a kinsman-redeemer to be involved because a kinsman-redeemer only bought back land that had already been sold. **Lev. 25:25** (By the way, the same verb and tense is used as here).

Our brother Elimelech - Our relative Elimelech. Evidently Elimelech owned the land but because of the famine had to leave it and go in search of food in Moab. The land was not productive and therefore it was of no use to him and his family.

Notice again, that the most important thing on Boaz's mind, Ruth, is not yet even mentioned. He is presenting the matter of the land first.

4: Vs. 4 -

And I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.' " And he said, "I will redeem it - *καὶ γὰρ εἶπα Ἀποκαλύψω τὸ οὖς σου λέγων Κτήσαι ἐναντίον τῶν καθημένων καὶ ἐναντίον τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τοῦ λαοῦ μου· εἰ ἀγχιστεύεις, ἀγχίστευε· εἰ δὲ μὴ ἀγχιστεύεις, ἀνάγγειλόν μοι, καὶ γινώσκειν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν παρὲς σοῦ τοῦ ἀγχιστεύσαι, καὶ γὰρ εἰμι μετὰ σέ. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἀγχιστεύσαι, καὶ γὰρ εἰμι μετὰ σέ. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἀγχιστεύσω -*

I thought to inform you - Literally, "to uncover your ear." It means to part their hair from over their ear so they would be sure to hear. "I wanted to make sure you heard it." This was a formal legal announcement.

Buy it back - This is the root meaning of redemption. Again, if Naomi hadn't sold it yet, how could he buy it back? The whole purpose of redemption was to buy the land back from the one who bought it and to restore it to the original owner.

In the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people - Evidently there were many witnesses now that had gathered in addition to the elders. **Ruth 4:9a**

Everyone was interested in how this was going to come out. Probably they had been wondering all along if something was happening between Boaz and Ruth.

If you will redeem it, redeem it - Boaz now gets down to the crux of the matter. He is presenting the man with his option under the law of the kinsman-redeemer.

But if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know - "If you are not going to redeem it, then let me know."

I am next after you - "I am" is in the emphatic position. The emphasis is on Boaz.

Next after you - "I am standing in the wings to redeem it, if you don't." Remember that there was a great disgrace if a person did not redeem property or if he did not take his dead brothers or relatives' wife and marry her.

But, of course, this man knows nothing of Ruth at this time. I kind of get the idea that Boaz is setting him up here. Then the man replies:

I will redeem it - Again, "I will" is in the emphatic position. The emphasis is on the man. This contrasts with Boaz's statement, "I am next after you." He agrees to buy the land back.

Is Boaz surprised by this? The text doesn't say. For all Boaz knew, if the man took the field, he might also take Ruth. On the kinsman's part, he thinks he has gotten a good deal. With very little money he could do his duty as a kinsman-redeemer and help his reputation.

4: Vs. 5 -

Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance - καὶ εἶπεν Βόος Ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κτήσασθαί σε τὸν ἀγρὸν ἐκ χειρὸς Νωεμὲν καὶ παρὰ Ῥοῦθ τῆς Μωαβεΐτιδος γυναῖκός τοῦ τεθνηκότος, καὶ αὐτὴν κτήσασθαί σε δεῖ, ὥστε ἀναστήσαι τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τεθνηκότος ἐπὶ τῆς κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ -

This is the pivotal verse. Boaz drops the bomb shell. He now plays his "trump card." (No pun intended).

He in effect says, "If you redeem the land, then you must also marry Ruth, the wife of the dead man (Elimelech) to insure that her children will be given her inheritance and property.

Ruth the Moabite - This is in the emphatic position. "From Ruth the Moabite." Boaz clearly states that Ruth is a Moabite which further complicates the situation. He mentions this because of the legal precision to distinguish her from any other Ruth. Ruth was a fairly common name in that day. Ruth was a fairly common name in that day.

Wife of the dead - This was another distinguishing legal term for Ruth. After Elimelech died, the property passed on to Mahlon and now that he was dead, on to Ruth. Strictly speaking, when someone sold their land because of poverty, etc., the land itself was not sold but only the produce from the land until the Year of Jubilee. The produce was what made the land valuable.

Buy - This is a legal perfect tense. It was used of legal transactions.

To perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance - The near kinsman was required by the law to marry the widow of the deceased man and to raise up children by her that they might receive the inheritance.

It was very important to have an heir living on the family land. The loss of heirs and land amounted to personal annihilation. To raise the name of the dead was to provide an heir to keep the name of the deceased in existence on the ancestral property. This would insure that Elimelech's family line survived.

You can see how Boaz is skillfully introducing a monkey wrench in the works, Ruth.

4: Vs. 6 -

And the close relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it - καὶ εἶπεν ὁ ἀγχιστεὺς Οὐ δυνήσομαι ἀγχιστεῦσαι ἑμαυτῷ, μή ποτε διαφθείρω τὴν κληρονομίαν μου· ἀγχιστευσὼν σεαυτῷ τὴν ἀγχιστείαν μου, ὅτι οὐ δυνήσομαι ἀγχιστεῦσαι -

I don't know for sure but I can imagine that you could almost hear a pin drop as everyone was waiting for the kinsman's reply, especially Boaz.

I cannot redeem it for myself - "I simply cannot afford it." The potential redeemer backs down at this new information about Ruth.

Lest I ruin my own inheritance - "The financial burden would be too great." You will notice that it does not say that the man was married. His chief concern was his financial burden, not his marriage.

Wechsler comments: "It is for this reason, his refusal to perform the Mosaic duty of a kinsman-redeemer and raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance that this man's own name has been forever omitted from the record of this event in Scripture."

He would have a double financial burden by:

1. Buying the field for Ruth's heir and not his own. He would be buying land that would not go to his children.
2. He would be providing for Ruth and her family. Again, it would be spending money on what was not actually his.

Ruin - A very strong word. In the OT it describes warfare, **II Chron. 34:11**, pests or enemies devouring crops, **Mal. 3:11**, or a jealous husband's revenge, **Pro. 6:32** (speaking of adultery).

A summary of his financial burden would be:

1. The redemption price would cost money, since the yearly produce of the field would have to be paid for up to the Year of Jubilee.
2. He would have to buy the property with assets from his estate only to lose it for Ruth's first child.
3. He would have to pay to care for the child.
4. He would have to care for Ruth as well as other children born to her.
5. He would have to care for Naomi.

You redeem my right of redemption for yourself - "I waive my right to redeem the land and marry Ruth and so you go ahead as the next in line."

For yourself - This is very emphatic in the Hebrew. "I cannot, you do it!"

Notice vs. 4: "I will redeem it," vs. 6, "I cannot redeem it" (Two times). Evidently after thinking it over, the added responsibility of marrying Ruth was too much. I am sure that a sigh of relief came from Boaz.

4: Vs. 7 -

Now this *was the custom* in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave *it* to the other, and this *was* a confirmation in Israel - καὶ τοῦτο τὸ δικαίωμα ἔμπροσθεν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀγχιστείαν καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἀντάλλαγμα, τοῦ στήσαι πάντα λόγον· καὶ ὑπελύετο ὁ ἀνὴρ τὸ ὑπόδημα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐδίδου τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ τῷ ἀγχιστεύοντι τὴν ἀγχιστείαν αὐτοῦ· καὶ τοῦτο ἦν μαρτύριον ἐν Ἰσραὴλ -

Verse 7 is a parenthesis to explain a custom in that day.

In former times - This indicates that Ruth was written after this period of time, at a later date. This was the custom that was used to show that the transaction was settled legally by the court of law. **Deut. 25:9-10**

One man took off his sandal and gave it to the other - When he gave over his sandal, he gave over the right of redemption to Boaz. This custom arose from the fact that fixed property was agreed upon by treading upon the soil and so taking off the shoe was a symbol of the transfer of a possession or right of ownership.

This was a confirmation in Israel - It symbolized Boaz's right to walk on the land as his property. **Deut. 1:35-36; 11:24; Joshua 1:2-3**

We would sign a paper or papers but this was the custom in that day. He was saying in essence: "Let this be a witness, that what was formerly mine is become yours with my consent."

In Deuteronomy the woman was to take off the man's shoe and spit in his face. Here this is not done because Boaz is the one who is taking over for Ruth, whereas in Deuteronomy, this was not done.

There the brother-in-law refused to take responsibility for the wife but here Boaz does this and so the spitting is not necessary.

The custom we have here is mentioned in the Nuzu Tablets (Dating from about 1500 B.C.) which are documents that were discovered southeast of Nineveh that have several customs that were like the ones mentioned in Genesis. The old owner would lift up his foot from the property and place the new owner's foot on it which was symbolic of transfer of the land.

4: Vs. 8 -

Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, "Buy *it* for yourself." So he took off his sandal - καὶ εἶπεν ὁ ἀγχιστεὺς τῷ Βόος Κτῆσαι σεαυτῷ τὴν ἀγχιστείαν μου· καὶ ὑπελύσατο τὸ ὑπόδημα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ -

Buy it for yourself - The man is turning over all rights of the property to Boaz.

So he took off his sandal - This was to show confirmation of this transaction. Boaz had already told him in vs. 4 that he would redeem the land and also marry Ruth.

This man now fades from the picture and we never hear from him again. We never knew his name and he remains anonymous. Not so with Boaz. He goes down in biblical history as the one who preserved Ruth.

You can imagine the joy of Boaz as all he has anticipated all along is now official and legal. It was the same with Jesus. When He said, "It is finished" there was great joy as He had provided everything for our redemption. **Heb. 12:2**

4: Vs. 9 -

And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You *are* witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi - Καὶ εἶπεν Βόος τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις καὶ παντὶ τῷ λαῷ Μάρτυρες ὑμεῖς σήμερον ὅτι κέκτημαι πάντα τὰ τοῦ Ἀβειμέλεχ καὶ πάντα ὅσα ὑπάρχει τῷ Χελαιὼν καὶ τῷ Μααλὼν ἐκ χειρὸς Νωεμείν -

There was just one more thing to do that Boaz felt was very important and that was to have the elders, and all the people act as witnesses to this transaction. That is why he had them all gather in the first place.

And Boaz said to the elders and all the people - There was evidently quite a crowd who had gathered to witness all that was happening. This is reminiscent of when Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah for a burying place from the sons of Heth. **Gen. 23:17-18**

You are witnesses this day - They were the official witnesses. We are never told they signed anything or made any proclamation. This took place back when a person's word was all that was required. It meant something.

Today, if you don't have everything down in writing, there is nothing legally binding. And even if you do, lawyers and courts reinterpret everything to their own ends and profit.

I have bought - Literally "I have bought back" which is the root meaning of redemption.

Elimelech, Chilion, Mahlon, Naomi - Notice that everyone is included here. The property was originally Elimelech's and then was passed on to his sons, Mahlon and Chilion at his death and then on to Naomi at their death. You will see that Orpah is never mentioned because she turned back to Moab.

Boaz was not concerned that he ruin his inheritance as was true of the other kinsman in vs. 6 but he was enhancing his property because it would be his as he was marrying Ruth also.

4: Vs. 10 -

Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate. *You are witnesses this day* - καὶ γε Ῥοῦθ τὴν Μωαβεῖτιν τὴν γυναῖκα Μασαλὼν κέκτημαι ἐμαυτῷ εἰς γυναῖκα τοῦ ἀναστήσαι τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τεθνηκότος ἐπὶ τῆς κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἐξολεθρευθήσεται τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τεθνηκότος ἐκ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς λαοῦ αὐτοῦ· μάρτυρες ὑμεῖς σήμερον -

Moreover - This makes all of this emphatic. It is the personal reason behind all of this.

Ruth the Moabitess - Ruth is not left out, on the contrary, she is the most important to Boaz and she was what was wanted all along. Ruth was a descendant, not of Abraham but of Lot.

Boaz is not ashamed to call her a Moabitess because she has demonstrated that she is a follower of Jehovah and has shown it by taking care of Naomi all this time as well as her devotion to Yahweh.

The widow of Mahlon - For what purpose was she a widow and a wife of Boaz?

1. **To perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance** - This was one intent of the law of levirate marriage that the name of the dead (Mahlon) might be carried on and that his inheritance might stay in the family and not pass on to someone else. Boaz also fully expected to have children by Ruth to carry on the name of the dead.

2. **That the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate** - Mahlon's name was not to be blotted out from the official records of Israel.

His position at the gate - The gate of Bethlehem. In other words, his family would have official recognition among the people. Again, we see the importance of the gate of the city as the place where official and legal matters were taken care of. It was the city hall, the place of government and authority. It was the place where records were kept.

You are witnesses - Again, Boaz swears them in as witnesses the second time. Cf. vs. 9.

This day - Boaz had carried out Naomi's prediction. **Ruth 3:18**

It is also to be understood that Boaz took responsibility for Naomi. She would be provided for. Ruth had cared for Naomi and now Boaz will care for them both.

As Boaz's wife, Ruth was now included in the covenant community of Israel. God was always concerned that Israel be a light to the Gentiles. In a small way, Ruth represents this desire.

4: Vs. 11 -

And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman who is coming to your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built the house of Israel; and may you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem - καὶ εἶποσαν πᾶς ὁ λαὸς οἱ ἐν τῇ πύλῃ Μάρτυρες. καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι εἶποσαν Δόφ Κύριος τὴν γυναῖκά σου τὴν εἰσπορευομένην εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου ὡς Ῥαχὴλ καὶ ὡς Λεῖαν, αἱ ὠκοδόμησαν ἀμφότεραι τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐποίησαν δύναμιν ἐν Ἐφράθᾳ· καὶ ἔσται ὄνομα ἐν Βαιθλέεμ -

We are witnesses - This notarized the transaction. The elders and people agree to be witnesses and to stand behind and recognize officially and legally all that has gone on.

They also pronounce an official blessing to Boaz and his family:

The LORD make the woman who is coming to your house (Ruth) like Rachel and Leah - These were the two wives of Jacob from whom the 12 tribes of Israel originated, as well as their handmaids.

Notice that Rachel was mentioned first. She was the woman that Jacob loved and worked for Laban for 14 years and then Laban deceived him and gave him Leah. She was also barren for many years like Ruth was in Moab.

Ephrathah - This is the ancient name for Bethlehem. **Gen. 35:19** (Ben-oni = "Son of my pain," Benjamin = "Son of my right hand")

Bethlehem - This is the name by which it was known to Boaz and Ruth. It is *Beth-lehem*, "house of bread." **Micah 5:2** The birthplace of Jesus the Messiah, the "bread of life."

This was a three-part blessing from the people:

1. To Ruth. **The woman who is coming to your house.** Ruth is to be blessed with children as Rachel and Leah were.

2. To Boaz. **May you prosper in Ephrathah.** To have valor, worth, nobility. This is the very prominent Hebrew word *Hayil* in Ruth. It is used of Boaz in **Ruth 2:1**, of Ruth in **Ruth 3:11** and here again of Boaz.

"May you continue to be the man of noble character and reputation that you have now." Boaz, by what he had done here had done nothing to tarnish that image but had really enhanced his standing among the people.

3. **And be famous in Bethlehem.** Literally, "be called by name, to shout out the name. Everyone would know of Boaz. It was a name of respect, honor and he had a conspicuous position among the people.

He already had this, obviously, and it would continue. What they are really saying is "Make to yourself a well-established name through your marriage with Ruth, by a host of worthy sons who shall make your name renowned."

We should value our good name. It is worth more than rubies. Once our name is tarnished, it is almost impossible to get it back. **Pro. 22:1; Eccl. 7:1** Their blessing is not finished.

4: Vs. 12 -

May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman - καὶ γένοιτο ὁ οἶκός σου ὡς ὁ οἶκος Φάρες, ὃν ἔτεκεν Θαμάρ τῷ Ἰούδα, ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος οὗ δώσει Κύριός σοι ἐκ τῆς παιδείσκης ταύτης -

May your house be like the house of Perez - Perez is found in Genesis 38. It is interesting that the people should mention the house of Perez because this was the first recorded instance in the Bible of levirate marriage.

To summarize, Judah, one of the sons of Jacob marries a Canaanite by the name of Shua. They have a son, Er. Then they have another son, Onan. Then they have a third son, Shelah.

Judah gets a wife for Er, who is Tamar. Er dies because he is wicked. Judah then has Onan marry Tamar.

As I said, this is the first instance of levirate marriage. Onan, however, does not consummate the marriage and this displeases God and He kills him. Judah then asks Tamar to remain a widow until Shelah is grown but Judah never intended for Shelah to marry Tamar lest he should die also.

Tamar finally realizes this and deceives Judah her father-in-law by acting as a prostitute and entices Judah. They have two sons, one of them is Perez.

Out of this sordid story in Genesis 38, God used it and Perez became the ancestor of Boaz and eventually of David and Jesus Christ. **Mt. 1:3**

Why did God use such sordid individuals to accomplish His purposes? One reason is that sinful man is all He has to work with.

Whom Tamar bore to Judah - They mention Tamar because she was a Canaanitess and one outside of Israel as was Ruth. Perez is mentioned here because of the fact that:

1. The levirate marriage involved Tamar. This was an example of levirate marriage before there was a law of levirate marriage. That was not until Deuteronomy 25.
2. Perez's descendants had settled in Bethlehem. They were probably included in this group of witnesses here.
3. Perez was an ancestor of Boaz. Ruth 4:18-21 (Which we will get to a little later).

Because of the offspring which the Lord will give you from this young woman - The marriage to Ruth was the important thing to the people, not the land. Of course, what greater offspring could there be than King David who was a great king of Israel in spite of his sin and also of Jesus our Saviour, who had no sin, who came through Ruth and Boaz.

So, the people didn't realize what they were saying, but what they wished certainly came to pass and the world has never been the same. **Ps. 127:3**

Young woman - Again, an age difference is implied between Boaz and Ruth and yet Boaz probably lived longer with Ruth than Mahlon had done.

I have said before that Boaz is a perfect illustration of Christ as our Kinsman-Redeemer. How is Christ our Kinsman-Redeemer? For One to be our Kinsman-Redeemer he had to:

1. Be a near kinsman. Boaz qualified because he was of the family of Elimelech. Christ was our near kinsman because He took upon Himself our humanity. **Heb. 2:14-17** Jesus knew what it was to be a man. **Heb. 5:2** He came born of a woman to redeem. **Gal. 4:4-5** He suffered, bled and died. He is able to be our redeemer because He knows us, He knows what we are going through.

Jean Ingelow wrote a poem expressing this:

O, God, O Kinsman loved, but not enough!
 O, Man, with eyes majestic after death,
 Whose feet have toiled along our pathways rough,
 Whose lips drawn human breath!
 By that one likeness which is ours and Thine,
 By that one nature which doth hold us kin;
 By that high heaven where sinless thou dost shine,
 To draw us sinners in.

2. Be willing to redeem. As we have seen, Boaz was very willing to redeem because he loved Ruth. Christ loved us too and was willing to redeem. **Rom. 3:24** ("Freely" means without a cause). There was no cause in us. All we had to offer was filthy rags. **Isa. 64:6**

Christ was a willing Redeemer. **Heb. 12:2** ("Joy" - what willingness!) This was no suicide. Jesus did it because He was saving someone whom He loved.

Many years ago down in Houston, a boarding house caught on fire and a woman broke through the lines and went into that burning building and she was burned to death. The newspaper headlines read: "Poor Wretch Dies: Suicide."

Later the newspaper printed an apology. Do you know why? Because later when the workmen were digging around in the rubble they found an iron bed and in that bed was a baby, her baby. She gave her life to save someone she loved. She wasn't a suicide.

3. Be able to redeem. Boaz was very able to redeem. He was well-to-do and was blessed financially to be able to pay the purchase price of the land and to marry Ruth. Christ also was abundantly able as the Son of God to redeem us. He had all the attributes of God Himself, deity, and man, humanity; therefore He could meet our need of redemption. **Heb. 7:25**.

He came and gave Himself as the purchase price for our redemption on the cross. **Gal. 3:13** He was raised from the dead, showing God the Father's propitiation (satisfaction) for this payment. **I John 2:2**

B. Ruth Bears a Son: Obed 4:13-15

This three verses contrasts with chapter one. Some has titled this "A bright color print developed from its gloomy negative." What a contrast when Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem feeling dejected and disillusioned to now when all is cheery and joyful.

4: Vs. 13 -

So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son - Καὶ ἔλαβεν Βόος τὴν Ῥούθ, καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῇ Κύριος κήσιν, καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱόν -

The Scripture is very succinct and to the point but I believe this was a great wedding and much rejoicing.

We are not given any of the details but I can surmise that Ruth and Naomi, sitting there at home were anxiously wondering what was going on. Boaz didn't come and didn't come and they were beginning to worry.

But before long they saw in the distance someone coming and Boaz comes and tells her what happened and that all the obstacles were cleared for their marriage. I can only imagine Ruth and Naomi's joy at the news and at the way the Lord had undertaken for her.

She became his wife - The Scripture just gives the bare facts of the marriage of Boaz and Ruth.

When he went in to her, the Lord gave her conception and she bore a son - The Lord was the one who enabled her to conceive. **Gen. 29:31; Ps. 139:13**

Ruth had been barren in Moab the entire time of her marriage to Mahlon. But now the Lord made it possible for her to conceive.

The Lord indeed controls the conception of children. You will remember that Sarah was barren, Rachel was barren for a long time and Hannah was barren until the Lord permitted her to conceive.

Of course, another birth would take place in Bethlehem many years later, the birth of the Anointed One, the Messiah. **Gal. 4:4-5**

The sojourn in Moab had lasted ten years but here in a short time, Ruth and Naomi had experienced blessings that they would have never thought possible.

Naomi had a gloomy outlook for Ruth in chapter one but here this was all turned around. Many times our outlook on life can be pretty dim but we never know what the Lord has in store for us if we are trusting in Him.

She bore a son - The Lord was good to them and gave to them a son. In Israel, to have a son was a blessing beyond all measure. The whole Jewish genealogical system was carried on through the sons because they were the ones who carried on the line. To have children was a great blessing in itself but to have a son was something really special.

4: Vs. 14 -

Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel! - καὶ εἶπαν αἱ γυναῖκες πρὸς Νωεμίην Εὐλογητὸς Κύριος ὃς οὐ κατέλυσέ σοι σήμερον τὸν ἀγχιστέα, καὶ καλέσαι τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐν Ἰσραὴλ -

The conclusion of the book contrasts beautifully with its introduction. It began with the famine; it ends with the fulfillment of all God was going to do. It began with death; it ends with new life, a new beginning. It begins with deep sorrow; it ends with great joy.

The women said to Naomi - You will remember that it was the women who were surprised to see Naomi so depressed when she and Ruth returned from Moab.

At the birth of John the Baptist, it was the relatives and neighbors, many of them women, I am sure, who rejoiced with Elizabeth. **Lk. 1:58**

Notice that it is Naomi who again takes the center stage. The emphasis shifts back to her again.

Blessed be the Lord - They realized that it was Yahweh that was behind all of these happenings.

Who has not left you this day without a close relative - They were speaking of Boaz and were saying that Naomi was really blessed because there was someone left who could act as her near kinsman, her redeemer.

If she did not have someone like Boaz, then none of this would have happened and they would have gone on as before.

Has not left you - Naomi, not Ruth. The women realized that if Naomi had not been old and beyond the childbearing years, she might have been the one at Boaz's feet on the threshing floor.

But Naomi, as well as Ruth benefited from the marriage of Boaz and Ruth because she knew that she would be taken care of for the rest of her days.

May his name be famous in Israel - In Ruth 4:11 Naomi was to be famous in Israel and now they are saying that Boaz is to be famous in Israel.

Of course, Obed would also be famous in Israel because he would be the ancestor of the coming Messiah. So, Ruth is filled with many blessings and benedictions.

4: Vs. 15 -

And may he be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him - καὶ ἔσται σοι εἰς ἐπιστρέφοντα ψυχὴν καὶ τοῦ διαθρέψαι τὴν πολιάν σου, ὅτι ἡ νύμφη ἡ ἀγαπήσασά σε ἔτεκεν αὐτόν, ἣ ἔστιν ἀγαθή σοι ὑπὲρ ἑπτὰ υἱούς -

Boaz was to be for Naomi two things through Obed:

1. **A restorer of life.** This means a movement back to the point of departure. What they were saying was that through Boaz, Naomi could go back like she was when her husband and two sons were alive and the prospect that they were to raise families and continue their name in Israel.

Even though Naomi was old and past childbearing years, Boaz was there to start a new family in Israel. It was a new beginning and really brought joy.

2. **A nourisher of your old age.** This means to sustain, provide sustenance. In other words, Naomi would be well taken care of.

In Biblical times the children were expected to care for their aged family members. Boaz would take care of Naomi in her old age.

For your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him - Ruth truly loved her mother-in-law and Naomi was truly fortunate to have a daughter-in-law like her.

Is better to you than seven sons - This is a sign of the blessing of God. Seven is the number of perfection. I Sam. 1:8; 2:5; Job 1:2 Naomi had lost her two sons, but Ruth was worth more than seven sons to her.

C. Naomi Receives a New Family 4:16

4: Vs. 16 -

Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him - καὶ ἔλαβεν Νωεμὲν τὸ παιδίον καὶ ἔθηκεν εἰς τὸν κόλπον αὐτῆς, καὶ ἐγενήθη αὐτῷ εἰς τιθηνόν -

Then Naomi took the child - "Took" is the same word as in vs. 13. Boaz took Ruth and Naomi took Obed.

And laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him - This is a miracle! This is still the case with many grandparents in that land to this day. She took Obed as her own. She so completely identified with the family of Boaz and Ruth.

She adopted Obed as her own son. She was so much a part of them that she considered herself as the mother.

D. Ruth is the Great-Grandmother of David 4:17-22

4: Vs. 17 -

Also the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David - καὶ ἐκάλεσαν αὐτοῦ αἱ γείτονες

ὄνομα λέγουσαι Ἐτέχθη υἱὸς τῇ Νωεμείν, καὶ ἐκάλεσαν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ὠβήδ· οὗτος πατὴρ Ἰεσσαὶ πατρὸς Δαυεὶδ -

The neighbor women gave him a name - It is interesting that the neighbor women named him and no one objects. These neighbor ladies must have been great friends. In fact, from vs. 14 on, the neighbor women exert a real force in the narrative. This is the only OT example of a baby being named by someone other than the parents.

There is a son born to Naomi - Notice that it is not a son born to Boaz and Ruth. This was said probably because Naomi would be recipient of most of the blessings of his birth, at least legally.

Obed - "Obed" means "servant" or "worshipper." He was given this name in reference as to what he would become to his grandmother.

The name "Obed" is often attached to the names of the God of Israel or of pagan gods. For instance, "Obadiah," (Servant of Yahweh), "Obed-Edom," (Servant of Edom), "Ebed-nego," (Servant of nego," a Babylonian god), "Abdullah," (Servant of Allah).

Naomi, the empty one was now full; Naomi, the bitter one was now blessed.

He is the father of Jesse, the father of David - Obed was Jesse's father and Jesse was the father of King David. Hubbard comments: "Suddenly, the simple, clever human story of two struggling widows takes on a startling new dimension. It becomes a bright, radiant thread woven into the fabric of Israel's larger national history."

And then when you figure in the birth of David's greater Son, Ha Mashiah, Yeshua, it really is a bright and radiant thread, not only for Israel but for the whole world.

So Obed is in the royal line. He is indeed famous along with Boaz. It shows the Lord's providence in spite of man's sin and man's disobedience. It just emphasizes the fact that God's will, will be accomplished.

4: Vs. 18 -

Now this is the genealogy of Perez: Perez begot Hezron - Καὶ αὗται αἱ γενέσεις Φάρες· Φάρες ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἑσρών -

We considered Perez in verse 12.

Genealogy - Generations. The families descended from Perez in their genealogical order. Not all names are listed. It only goes back as far as Perez because he was the son of Judah.

Vss. 18-22 give the genealogy from Perez to David. This genealogy is very important because it is the only written record we have that links David with the tribe of Judah. Without it we would not know this.

Perez - He was the son of Judah by Tamar. Genesis 38. We looked at this earlier. So Perez was of the tribe of Judah, thus giving us the link with the tribe of Judah. His descendants were notable in the time of David. **I Chron. 27:23** Then he appears after the Babylonian Captivity. **I Chron. 9:4; Neh. 11:4-6**

Hezron - He was the older son of Perez. He is mentioned in **Gen. 46:12** as being among the sons of Judah who emigrated with Jacob into Egypt. He is also mentioned in **Mt. 1:3**.

4: Vs. 19 -

Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab -

Ram - This is the first time "Ram" is mentioned. He is also mentioned in **I Chron. 2:9-10**. He was probably born in Egypt because his name does not appear in Genesis 46:12.

He was also mentioned in Matthew 1:3 and **Lk. 3:33** in the genealogy of Mary. This was after 1875 B.C.

Amminadab - He was the father-in-law of Aaron. **Ex. 6:23** He was included in the first numbering of Israel in the second year of the Exodus. **Num. 1:7; 2:3** He is also mentioned in Matthew 1:3 and Luke 3:33, around 1440 B.C.

4: Vs. 20 -

Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon - καὶ Ἀμειναδάβ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ναασσών, καὶ Ναασσών ἐγέννησεν τὸν Σαλμάν -

Nahshon - He was a prince of Judah when the people were first numbered in the desert when they came out of Egypt. **Ex. 6:23** His sister Elisheba was wife to Aaron, the high priest.

In the encampment in the wilderness in Num. 2:3, the first place is assigned to him as captain of Judah's host.

Also, in the offering of the princes, Num. 7:12, 17, and in the order of the march. Num. 10:14

We know little of him except that he died in the wilderness. Num. 26:64-65

His name also appears in Mt. 1:4 and Lk. 3:32.

Salmon - Again, we know little of him except that he married Rahab the harlot after the taking of Jericho. Mt. 1:5 This took place before 1150 B.C.

4: Vs. 21 -

Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed - καὶ Σαλμὼν ἐγέννησεν τὸν Βόος, καὶ Βόος ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ὠβήδ -

Salmon begot Boaz - Rahab was the mother of Boaz. Mt. 1:5-6 Rahab, of course was a woman of Jericho, therefore a Gentile.

Although we are never told, there is speculation that Salmon may have been one of the spies that was sent by Joshua to spy out the land and this was how he met Rahab.

Boaz begot Obed - We have seen Obed in the preceding verses of Ruth.

4: Vs. 22 -

Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David - καὶ Ὠβήδ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰεσσαί, καὶ Ἰεσσαί ἐγέννησεν τὸν Δαυεὶδ -

Jesse begot David - This, of course, is King David. Jesse was virtually unknown, only in relation to David.

After David was separated from Saul, the name "Son of Jesse" was used as a demeaning phrase. I Sam. 20:30-31; 22:7; 25:10

David - More appropriately "David the King" to distinguish him from just any David.

There are several things for us to learn from this genealogy:

1. This is the only record that records the link between David and the tribe of Judah, i.e. with Perez.
2. The genealogy starts out with many years and many omissions and ends with few years and no omissions.

For example, there are only four or five generations to the 430 years of the time spent in Egypt. From Perez to Nahshon. So there were omissions in the narrative.

Then from Nahshon to Boaz, there are only two generations that are given for a space of 250 years. This would have been from the death of Moses to the time of Gideon.

All of the members between Salmon to Boaz are passed over. From Boaz to Obed, Obed to Jesse and Jesse to David are complete with no omissions.

3. The whole chain from Perez to David consists of ten links, five of which (Perez to Nahshon) belong to the 430 years of the sojourn in Egypt and five (from Salmon to David) belong to the 476 years between the exodus and the death of David.

This symmetrical division is intentional and is for a purpose. Using the number ten as the number of completeness, it shows that it is a perfect, complete and symmetrical whole.

This can be seen in other genealogies. Mt. 1:17 It was divided up into 14 generations on purpose, not including everyone.

So when you read the genealogies in the Bible, don't say "Oh, here we have another dry dusty genealogy" but see that God had a purpose and order in all He records. Genealogies are given "by inspiration of God" and also are "profitable."

4. The genealogy closes with David and you get the feeling that one of the purposes of the book is to give the family picture of this great king of Israel. Another reason was probably because it was written in the time of David and not after this.

One writes: "It was the glory of Ruth to have David, 'the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet singer of Israel,' mentioned amongst her descendants. The lineage of this good woman here ends in this greatest and best of kings; this eminent pattern set before all kings that are blessed with the knowledge of God, for their model." He continues:

"But it is a far greater glory that we find not only her (i.e. Ruth) husband's name, but her own, expressly mentioned amongst the ancestors of our Lord. A rich recompense was given her by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings she came from the land of Moab to trust. Yet we have no reason to envy her glory amongst mothers. We are related to Jesus by a more endearing and a closer connection, if we do the will of His Father. 'He who does the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my mother, and sister, and brother.'"

5. Notice the Gentiles in this genealogy. Tamar, mother of Perez, Rahab, wife of Salmon, mother of Boaz, Ruth the Moabitess, wife of Boaz, mother of Obed. God also used the Gentiles to accomplish His purposes. God is going to accomplish His purposes in this world, with or without our cooperation. He will use obedient people of whatever race or nationality. God is sovereign.

6. Ruth was from Moab, and it is not surprising that when David was fleeing from Saul, he took his mother and father to stay with the king of Moab for safekeeping.

7. All of the members of the genealogy of David are also found in the genealogy of Jesus. Make no mistake about it. The Bible is the story of Jesus Christ. He is its central theme both in the OT and the NT. He is revealed as to who He is.

Keil and Delitzsch comment: "This passage is given by Matthew word for word in the genealogy of Christ, that we may see that this history looks not so much to David as to Jesus Christ, who was proclaimed by all as the Saviour and Redeemer of the human race, and that we may learn with what wonderful compassion the Lord raises up the lowly and despised to the greatest glory and majesty."

What are some applications that we can make from the Book of Ruth?

Chapter 1. God is the Sovereign. No matter how dark the circumstances, God in His providence is working all things after the counsel of His own will.

Chapter 2. God is the Provider. God always provides for us in times of need. He won't necessarily make us millionaires, but He will provide. **Phil. 4:19** Boaz took an interest in Ruth and provided for her. God will do the same for us.

Chapter 3. God is the Sustainer. God uses us to accomplish His will. God used Naomi's suggestions and Ruth's agency to accomplish His will. He sustained them in all their plans for Him.

Chapter 4. God is the Redeemer. God worked it out so that Boaz was able to redeem Ruth with all that that involved. He redeemed us as well through the blood of Christ. **Eph. 1:7** He is our Kinsman-Redeemer. We can only give Him the glory and praise His name!