



Kingdom
Conference

Ruth

Redeemed by the Holy One of
Israel

Kingdom Conference 2020
Workbook

Ruth looked out over the murky waters of the Jordan River to the barren hills beyond, through which the path wound its way up to the village of Bethlehem. Listening to her mother in law's stories, she had so often imagined what life must be like in that little village.

She remembered standing on the hills of Moab, looking across the salt sea, trying to picture what it would be like to live among all those different characters that Naomi had so vividly described to her. The Israelites seemed similar in many respects to the Moabites, but also so separate because of the law of their God. Now Ruth was on her way to the place she had imagined and longed to see.

As Ruth came to realise that Israel's God is the one true God, she almost pictured the Israelites in an idealised way, perfectly keeping the commandments of their Saviour who had brought them out of Egypt. Now however, as she stood contemplating her future, she knew the reality. Many of the Israelites were faithless, they were people like anyone else. They also, like any other group of people, would automatically look on a foreigner with some contempt. Especially a despised Moabite.

Ruth had no illusions of what life would be like. Naomi had made it abundantly clear that following her back to Bethlehem would be far from an easy path. Nevertheless, Ruth felt excitement along with her trepidation. She was about to cross the Jordan River, just like the children of Israel all those years ago under the leadership of Joshua; she was embarking on a new life, a new beginning.

Whatever hardships she might face, Ruth knew that she could take full confidence. She knew in whom she trusted; she had come to take shelter under the wings of the Holy One of Israel.

Introduction

My dear brothers, sisters and young people. This July, Lord willing, we will meet away from the distractions of the world, to focus our minds on this short but delightful book of Ruth. We will have opportunity to speak often one to another of the gems contained in this book, uplifting each other that we might always remain sheltered under the wings of the One in whom we have come to trust. It is very exciting so many of us can set aside time to delve into the riches contained in this book and come together to share our findings. This workbook is designed to make sure that we all are familiar with the basics of the book of Ruth and to promote further individual in-depth study.

There are two types of questions found in this book:

- 1) The quick, easy to answer, questions designed to make sure that we all have a firm foundation for understanding the book.
- 2) More in-depth questions to encourage personal digging and meditation.

This means that the workbook is relatively short compared to those of other youth conferences and possible to complete in a shorter space of time. However, it is hoped that you will be inspired to dedicate your time to look in depth at the book of Ruth as this will not only help to make the discussions at conference more profitable but also the lessons uncovered will stay with you for life.

The book of Ruth is not just a book, it is part of the inspired word of God. It contains the true stories and emotions of characters that lived long ago. It looks forward to the redemptive work of God in Christ Jesus and teaches us how to live as we await the day when those such as Ruth will be raised back to life.

It is also exciting that when conference is over we will be able to take pleasure and profit from having completed a study on a whole book of the Bible.. only 65 left to go! 😊

If there are any questions about the workbook or items that you would like to discuss about the book of Ruth, then please send me an email.

As Boaz would say, 'Yahweh be with you'. May God bless our studies of the word and may it be seen in the day of Christ's return that we too were redeemed by the Holy One of Israel.

With love in Israel's hope,

Brother Luke Foley

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Contents

Section 1 – Reading	1
Section 2 – Structure	1
Section 3 – Background Research	2
Section 4 – Basic Questions	2
Introduction to Ruth	2
Ruth 1.....	7
Ruth 2.....	10
Ruth 3.....	12
Ruth 4.....	16
Conclusion.....	19
Section 5 – Type.....	21
Section 6 – Further Study.....	26
Section 7 – Conclusion and Sharing	27

Section 1 – Reading

For this section all that is required is to read through the book of Ruth in one sitting. Try and reflect on the events that take place, see if you can put yourself there and really make it live. It is recommended to have a pen/pencil with you to write down any questions that occur to you as you go through the book.

Section 2 – Structure

Skim through the book again; have a think about the structure of the book and how you would split it into sections. It may be useful to mark any findings in your Bible.

Also, you may find it helpful to mark the following words:

Return (H7725) (This theme beautifully finishes in chapter 4)

Glean (H3950)

Kinsman/Redeem (H1350)

Note – 'kinsman' in chapter 2.1 is a different Hebrew word. You can use a Bible app to look up all the occurrences of the words in the Hebrew. The Strong's numbers are provided in brackets.

Highlighting the above words helps these themes to stand out and helps us to visualise different sections.

Section 3 – Background Research

Do either of the following:

- 1) Find a Christadelphian series of talks on the book of Ruth and listen to them, taking notes as you go.
- 2) Find a Christadelphian book on Ruth and read through it, taking notes as you go.

Go to the webpage www.kingdomconference.co.uk/pages/work-book.html and fill out the Google form to let us know which series/book you have used.

Resource note:

www.christadelphianbibletalks.com may be useful for finding talks.

The workbook author can strongly recommend getting a copy of the green expositor on 'The book of Ruth' by Brother H. P. Mansfield.

Section 4 – Basic Questions

Introduction to Ruth

The book is set in the days of the Judges (Ruth 1.1).
What was Israel like in the days of the Judges?

Ruth can be considered as the third appendix to the book of the Judges. The 1st appendix would be Judges 17-18 and the 2nd appendix would be Judges 19-21.

Summarise what happens in Judges 17-18:

Summarise Judges 19-21:

What is the time period for each of the appendices (hint - we do not know exactly but we can look at the characters involved in the accounts).

Judges 17-18:

In the days of Moses' grandson (two generations after Moses) - Judges 18.30

Judges 19-21:

Ruth:

Which town features in all 3 accounts?

Any other similarities between the accounts?

What do we learn about the state of the tribes mentioned in the accounts?

Judges 17-18: Dan

Judges 19-21: Benjamin

Ruth: Judah

We see then that the book of Ruth is paralleled with the two sad 'appendices' at the end of the Judges. Although the terrible state of the nation is seen in the first two appendices, with apostasy and immorality, the book of Ruth contains hope. We find that in the days when there was 'no king in Israel', Yahweh, the true King, is overseeing the line of the Messiah.

Can you see any parallels between the time of the Judges to our day? What exhortations follow from this for us?

What can we deduce about when the book of Ruth was written? (Ruth 1.1, 4.7, 4.22)

Where is Ruth mentioned outside of the book? What does this tell us of the importance of this book, and this Sister?

The laws of redemption are key to the book of Ruth. Look at the following passages and summarise the laws:

Deuteronomy 25.5-10 (Sometimes referred to as the levirate law – nothing to do with Levites!)

Leviticus 25.25-28

What do the following names mean? In what way are the names appropriate?

Bethlehem-Judah:

Elimelech:

Naomi:

Mahlon:

Chilion:

Orpah:

Ruth:

Mara:

Boaz:

Obed:

Ruth 1

Elimelech led his family to Moab. He presumably had good intentions, desiring to look after his family, however, was this a wise decision?

Contrast Elimelech with Boaz who must have stayed in the land.

Did Naomi have responsibility for the downfall of her family too? Could she have done anything different?

How far is Moab from Bethlehem as the crow flies? How long would the journey be to travel there on foot?

Did Ruth marry Mahlon or Chilion? (Ruth 4.10)

What do we know about Moabites?

Ruth and Orpah both initially follow their mother in law. What does this show about their love and respect for their mother in law?

Why does Naomi encourage her daughters in law to go back?

Contrast Ruth and Orpah and how their decisions affected both their mortal lives and their eternal hopes.

Ruth confesses her faith, crosses the Jordan River and goes to live in a new land just like Abraham did all those years previous. How does this relate to our commitments to the truth?

Ruth clave to Naomi and in so doing she clave to Naomi's God and was brought into the hope of Israel. How does this relate to us? (Ephesians 2.11-13)

Why does Naomi say to call her Mara? (It's worth noting that in the Hebrew, 'grieveth' in v13 is the same word as 'bitterly' in v20)

Naomi uses the title 'Almighty' (Hebrew - 'Shaddai') in v21. What is the significance of how this title is used elsewhere in Scripture and how does that relate here?

What is the significance of them returning at the beginning of Barley harvest?

Try to imagine what it would have been like for Naomi to return to Bethlehem after all those years and after everything that happened. How would she feel?

How do you think Ruth would have felt leaving home to journey to Israel?

How would Ruth be rewarded? (Matthew 10.37-39)

Ruth 2

Where else does the Hebrew word translated in v1 as 'wealth' occur in the book of Ruth? What do we learn from this?

Ruth was able to go and glean in the field according to the law. Find where in the law it gives this provision.

Ruth was prepared to work very hard, what does her example teach us? Can you think of any passages to support the need to work hard both in our employment and in the truth?

What does the way in which Boaz greets the reapers and their response teach us about this man? Especially at a time when there was so much wickedness in the land.

Boaz notices the newcomer to his field. What does this tell us about him?

When visitors come to our ecclesia, how can we make sure that they feel welcome?

How does Boaz look after Ruth? How does this exhort us?

Boaz isn't afraid to look after a Moabitess. Who was Boaz's mother and how would this have helped Boaz to empathise with Ruth?

Where else is the figure used of God having wings?

Ruth acts in a very humble way toward Boaz, what can we learn from the way in which she speaks?

The word 'left' in the KJV at the end of v14 is the same Hebrew word as 'reserved' in v18. What does this teach us?

How many meals would an ephah of barley provide for? Use Exodus 16.16, 36 to help get an idea, presuming that we can equate barley and manna.

What is significant about Boaz being near of kin to Naomi and Ruth?

Ruth 2.23 covers a considerable amount of time. What would life have been like for Ruth, Naomi and Boaz during this time? What sorts of things would they have been thinking about?

Ruth 3

Boaz winnows the barley, whereas he could leave this to his servants. What does this tell us about his character?

What does Naomi ask Ruth to do at the beginning of the chapter and how does Ruth respond?

What is significant about Ruth uncovering Boaz's feet and then lying by his feet? Deuteronomy 25.5-10 may help. It is also a submissive place to lie.

What does the Hebrew word translated 'merry' in v7 mean? We know that Boaz wouldn't have been drunk. Give a passage to show that getting drunk is not appropriate for saints of light.

How does Ecclesiastes 5.12 apply to Boaz?

What does Ruth ask for in v9? Ezekiel 16.8 may help.

In v9 the Hebrew word here translated 'skirt' has already occurred in the book. Where was it used before?

How much older does it seem that Boaz is than Ruth from considering v10?

Ruth didn't follow young men, so what did Ruth look for in a husband? What characteristics should we look for in a husband/wife?

In v10, what 'kindness' did Ruth show 'at the beginning'?

What does it mean for Ruth to be a virtuous woman and to be famed as such?

What does it mean to perform the part of a kinsman?

Why does Boaz love Ruth? What characteristics will cause the Lord Jesus to love us?

In v12 Boaz shows that he intends to follow the law. Even though he loves Ruth, he puts the ways of God first. What should this teach us? What examples may come up in our lives?

Why in v14 does Boaz not want it to be known that Ruth came?

What present of thanks does Boaz send to Naomi?

In v16 what is Naomi really asking when she says, 'who art thou, my daughter?'

Ruth is told to 'sit still', would she have found this easy under the circumstances?

When Boaz awoke to find Ruth, it is easy to imagine how he would have been startled. Ruth would have been in great anticipation and Naomi back home would be sleepless wondering how things were going. What sorts of emotions would they have all experienced during this dramatic night?

Ruth 4

What is the import of the gate of a city in Scripture?

How does the nearer kinsman contrast to Boaz?

Why doesn't the nearer kinsman want to redeem?

How does what happened in v7-8 match and contrast what the law said in Deuteronomy 25.5-10?

What does Boaz buy and what is he doing for Elimelech's family?

V11 is the only occurrence where we read of Leah by name outside of Genesis!
Why are Rachel and Leah spoken about?

Why are Pharez and Tamar mentioned? How does the account of Tamar's life relate to the account of Ruth?

What is significant about the phrase, 'Yahweh gave her conception' in v13?
Might Ruth have been barren in the past when she was married to Mahlon?

In v15 Ruth is said to be better than seven sons to Naomi. Had Naomi appreciated this when she first returned from Bethlehem?

Why did Naomi take the child in v16?

Who names the son?

What is significant about the genealogy at the end of the book? Why does the book end in this way?

Try to imagine what it was like for Naomi and Ruth when Boaz was off seeking the nearer kinsman. What emotions would they have experienced? What about Boaz?

How do you think the town viewed the marriage of Boaz and Ruth?

What sort of parents would Boaz and Ruth have been?

Conclusion

What do you think the book of Ruth would have meant to believers down through the centuries, including the Lord Jesus Christ?

What are the main themes in this book?

What are the main lessons you have taken so far from this book?

The questions at the end of each chapter have hopefully encouraged you to imagine what life was like for the different characters in the book. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask Boaz, Ruth or Naomi after the resurrection?

Section 5 – Type

Ruth is a book all about redemption. We too like Ruth are in need of a redeemer. As we go through the book, we find a wonderful type developed to teach us of the way in which we are redeemed.

To develop this type it might be helpful to start off by considering Boaz. Boaz is the redeemer and so represents the redemptive work that God wrought in Christ Jesus.

What passages speak of the Lord Jesus as a redeemer?

Why is it so important that the Lord Jesus was a kinsman redeemer and therefore had to be related to us, which he was by being in the flesh?

If Boaz represents the Lord Jesus then who does Ruth, the bride of Boaz, represent?

Naomi was also redeemed by Boaz. It is suggested in the expositor on Ruth by Brother H. P. Mansfield, that she represents the new covenant. (This book is very helpful for developing the type throughout the book of Ruth). This would fit with what Sarah represents in Galatians 4.22-31. Read this passage and explain what Sarah and Hagar represent.

Galatians 4.27 is a quote from Isaiah 54.1 which is speaking to Jerusalem as if Jerusalem were a woman (Isaiah 52.1-2). Galatians describes it as 'Jerusalem which is above'.

Read Isaiah 54 and note that it also links to the 'new Jerusalem' in Revelation 21 which again describes both a city and a woman (21.9 'the Lamb's wife'). How does the woman in Isaiah 54 relate to Sarah?

In what ways doesn't the woman fit with Sarah and how does she fit with Naomi, Ruth and other women that had similar circumstances?

In what way was the new covenant desolate and widowed?

What will the end be for the new covenant? How many children will she have then? (Remember that Galatians 4 explains what the children represent).

How do the Gentiles fit into this? Isaiah 54.2-3, Genesis 9.27, Genesis 28.14, Amos 9.11-12. Note how Amos is quoted in Acts 15. Also, it is interesting to note in this context how that Paul, 'the apostle of the Gentiles' was a tent maker!

Think about how Naomi representing the new covenant fits with what we read in the book. For example, at the beginning of the book, two Moabitesses come into contact with the new covenant through Naomi and are called upon to make their decision of how they will react to their new knowledge.

3) In Ruth 3.1, Naomi says that she is seeking rest for Ruth by which she means that she is seeking a husband for Ruth (see chapter 1.9). However, it is phrased in this specific way using the word rest. What does the 'rest' represent? E.g. Deuteronomy 12.9, Hebrews 4.1. How does this 'rest' relate to marriage for us also?

4) In Ruth 4, the unnamed kinsman fitly represents the law or the old covenant, the same as Hagar in Galatians 4. In what way was the law a nearer kinsman than Christ? The kinsman was willing to redeem the land but not Ruth, how does this relate to the law's inability to save us? (Romans 8.3)

Section 6 – Further Study

These questions may require longer answers than some of the previous questions. Answer them on separate pieces of paper and insert them into your workbook.

- 1) Compare Ruth to the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31. What parallels can be found?
- 2) We have seen that Ruth and Boaz are both called 'virtuous' in the Hebrew. How many other similarities can you find between this faithful couple?
- 3) How does Psalm 45 relate to Ruth and Boaz? What does it teach us of how we should be like Ruth?
- 4) What parallels and contrasts can you think of between Ruth and Esther?
- 5) How does Ruth fulfil the different characteristics of charity/love in 1 Corinthians 13?
- 6) In Deuteronomy 25.9-10 the kinsman who would not redeem has to have his shoe loosed. How does this relate to the words of John the Baptist in John 1.27? Where else do we find the idea of removing shoes in Scripture and do these passages relate?
- 7) Write a character sketch of each of the main characters in the book of Ruth.
- 8) Trace Bethlehem throughout the Scriptures and write an overview of the events that relate to this famous place.

Section 7 – Conclusion and Sharing

Are there any unanswered questions that have occurred to you during your study? Write them here, try to answer them before conference and if not remember to ask them during the week. 😊

Write at least 3 exhortations that you have taken from your studies. Consider how these can be implemented in your life and make a difference to your character.

Take a neat expositional point or lesson that you have been excited to find during your studies. Share this point with at least 2 friends!