

It's interesting that Ruth is the 8th book of the Hebrew canon of Scripture.

Genesis is the book of beginnings. Exodus speaks of redemption. Leviticus teaches us to worship. Numbers teaches us how to walk with God. Deuteronomy stresses the importance of obedience. Joshua is about our victory over our enemies. Judges describes what happens when we fail to fully follow. The 9th book, Samuel, describes the establishment of the Kingdom.

Now think of these 9 books as an outline of Hebrew history:

- beginnings, redemption, worship, walk, obedience, victory, failure, ultimately God's kingdom. But in between Israel's failure and the coming of God's kingdom, God will call out a Gentile bride for His Son Jesus... thus, the book of Ruth, the 8<sup>th</sup> book; 8 is the number of new beginnings. The Bride is revealed before the Kingdom is set up. The Book of Ruth anticipates the church.

Why is God not mentioned in the book of Ruth?

Through Ruth's own life, God subtly weaves the furtherance of His divine will. God is incredibly active throughout the narrative. The book of Ruth provides great encouragement for us living by faith today. Although we may not see God at work, He remains active in our lives.

### *Background Information*

A. The Bible sometimes refers to Ruth the Moabitess and other times, it calls her Ruth.

Key Point#1 The author makes a point to say "Ruth the Moabitess" 5x.

➤ Ruth 1:22 Ruth 2:2 Ruth 2:21 Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:10

He refers to Ruth as a "Moabite" in Ruth 1:4 and Ruth 2:6.

This reminds us of Ruth's status as a foreigner and a Gentile, one outside of the covenant promises of Israel and a stranger to Israel's God, Jehovah

Deut. 23:3 No Ammonite or Moabite or any of their descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD, not even up to the tenth generation.

➤ This underscores a serious prohibition against these two nations because of how they treated Israel.

Question: Was it against Mosaic Law for Boaz to marry Ruth?

How can the permanent exclusion of Ammonites & Moabites align with the story of Ruth, A Moabite woman in David's lineage? How do we reconcile these seemingly contradictory statements: a permanent exclusion on the one hand, & Ruth's inclusion on the other?

The exclusion of Ammonites & Moabites reflects a judicial mandate against these nations' long-standing hostility toward Israel.

Ruth's acceptance into the community & subsequent inclusion in David's lineage highlight an exception Rooted In Her Full Embrace Of Israel's God.

God's Grace: The exclusion was not an unbending ethnic ban but a call to protect the covenant from spiritual corruption while leaving room for genuine Repentance & Faith.

Through Ruth's example, the Scriptures reveal the expansive reach of God's redemptive plan, incorporating Gentiles who abandon idolatry & align themselves with Yahweh.

The prohibition stands to defend covenant holiness, yet it does not impede the Biblical truth that every person who sincerely commits to the God of Israel can be grafted into His people, ultimately finding a place in salvation's grand design.

Eph. 2:11-12 Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders. You were called "uncircumcised heathens" by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts. <sup>12</sup> In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope.

Key Point #2 The author refers to her as "Ruth" in:

Ruth 1:16 But Ruth replied, Don't ask me to leave you and turn back...

Your people will be my people and your God will be my God.

Ruth 2:8 Boaz went over and said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter."

Ruth 2:23 So Ruth worked alongside the women in Boaz's fields.

Ruth 3:9 I am your servant Ruth,...

Ruth 4:13 So Boaz took Ruth into his home, and she became his wife.

Note: She is called Ruth 5 times. 5 is the number of grace, favor & provision in the Bible.

### *B. God Provided Laws for the Widows & The Poor*

Law of Gleaning: passages in Leviticus 19 & 23.

- When you harvested your field, you could not harvest your entire field.
- You must leave the edges of your field unharvested so widows and the poor could come harvest the edges.
- There was no welfare program. Widows and the poor had to work to harvest what was left for them to glean. They were responsible for working to provide for themselves.
- The Covenant Community was responsible for making the gleanings available to them.

### *C. Law of Levirate Marriage Deut. 25:5-6*

The Law says that if a man should die without leaving any heirs, that a brother or near relative of the dead man was required to marry the widow & to have a child by her to become the heir of whatever was owned by that man who died.

1. If a man dies without a son, his widowed wife is to marry his brother.
2. This ensures the deceased man's name and lineage are not forgotten.
3. The first son born from this union is considered the son of the deceased brother.
4. The dead man's family name would not perish from the face of the earth.

Key: One of the men qualified to fulfill this requirement was Boaz, a mighty man of wealth.

D. Law of the Kinsman Redeemer: Law of Redemption Leviticus 25:47-50

Provision was made in the Law of Moses:

➤ for the poor person who was forced to sell part of his property or himself into slavery.

Kinsman Redeemer had to meet 3 conditions:

- a. He had to be a near kinsman.
- b. He had to be able to perform the duty.
- c. He had to be willing; it was not required.
- d. If the kinsman chose not to perform this duty, he had to give the widow his shoe, a symbol of shame. He had failed to do the kinsman's part.
- e. Redemption was completed when the price was completely paid.

E. Types in Book of Ruth

Naomi = Type of Israel

Ruth = Type of Church = Gentile Bride

Boaz = Type of Jesus Christ, Redeemer

Naomi in Moab is in exile and destitute.

Key: Ruth never replaces Naomi. [Church NEVER replaces Israel]

Ruth learns of Boaz's ways through Naomi [Salvation is of the Jews]

Key: Romans 9-11 communicates the idea of the relationship of the Salvation of the Gentiles to that of the Salvation of the Jews. God made a promise to Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. God always intended that salvation would include the Gentiles.

➤ Ruth is a significant figure in Salvation history through her being grafted in.

F. Ruth's Initial Commitment: Ruth 1:16c *Your people shall be my people, and Your God, My God.*

- This declaration signifies a complete, voluntary adoption of the faith of Israel.
- It marks a conversion from her polytheistic Moabite background to worshiping the one true God, sealing her vow with a pledge of lifelong loyalty.

Her decision to remain with Naomi was not merely emotional devotion—it was a declaration of faith. In choosing Naomi's people and Naomi's God, Ruth stepped away from familiarity and into uncertainty, trusting that obedience was worth the cost.

She abandoned one kingdom to be joined to another. Jesus Christ died to rescue believers from the kingdom of darkness and transfer them into His kingdom of light. [Col. 1:13]

The old life is gone; a new life has begun. II Cor. 5:17

G. The book of Ruth actually tells time based on agricultural cycles.

Ruth 1:22c Now they came to Bethlehem at the Beginning Of Barley Harvest. [significant]

➤ It started in the Jewish month of Nisan because it coincided with Passover.

Interesting: God had Joshua lead the children of Israel into their Promised Land at the beginning of the Barley Harvest. [Joshua 3:15]. They crossed the Jordan on Nisan 10.

They were to consecrate themselves and rely on God to supply their needs.

The supply of corn upon Israel's first entrance into Canaan was an earnest of the promise which God had made through Moses in:

Deut. 6:10-11: So it shall be, when the Lord your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, <sup>11</sup> houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant...

Joshua 23:14 And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you.

H. The Barley Harvest is a pivotal, providential event in the Book of Ruth that allows the story to unfold, specifically by providing the setting for Ruth to meet her future redeemer, Boaz.

It is a time of provision that enables Ruth to glean in Boaz's fields. This timing is crucial to the plot, leading to their marriage and Ruth's inclusion in the lineage of King David.

- A time of Provision: The harvest represented a time of abundance and renewal in ancient Israel. It provided an opportunity for Ruth and Naomi, who were in a desperate state, to find food.
- The meeting with Boaz: The harvest season is what puts Ruth in the fields to work, where she happens to glean in the fields of Boaz, a man of noble character and a relative of Naomi's deceased husband.
- Symbol of Hope: The harvest symbolizes new beginnings, hope, and God's providence, which parallels the spiritual renewal that Naomi and Ruth would experience.
- A setting for Redemption: The harvest's timing makes it possible for the kinsman-redeemer custom to be initiated, as Boaz is able to legally and generously protect and provide for Ruth during this time.

I. The beginning of the Barley Harvest is during the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Feast of Unleavened Bread: Nissan 15-21

- Spans the seven days immediately following Passover.
- Commemorates the swift departure of the Israelites from Egypt
- The absence of yeast is symbolic of spiritual purity.
- It represents the removal of sin and impurity from one's life.
- Reminder of the humility and dependence that God desires

- People were prompted toward introspection, repentance, and a renewed commitment to live free from the contamination of sin.

Barley symbolizes God's provision, humility, and the sufficiency of God's grace, especially from humble or unlikely sources.

With a barley loaf, God can perform miracles, demonstrate His power to use the humble and ordinary to achieve extraordinary results.

J. Barley, being the first grain to ripen, represents the first fruits of the harvest and is a symbol of new beginnings and God's faithfulness.

It is the start of a new season of provision, redemption, and even the resurrection of Christ.

- To come at the beginning of the barley harvest, you were just in time to partake of the joy and blessings of the entire harvest.
- Time when they expressed joy and praise to God. It was spring, a time of new life. Hope Is Rising! It is the Beginning of Barley Harvest!
- Boaz, type of Jesus our Kinsman Redeemer, is coming.

K. Spiritual Journey of Counting the Omer to Feast of Weeks or Shavuot

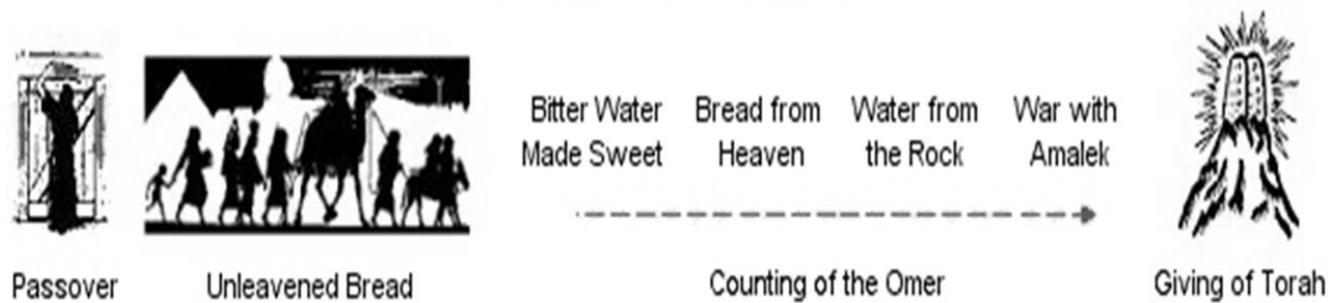
Time period of 50 days of transformation that needed to take place for the Israelites as they came out of Egypt to encountering God at Mt. Sinai.

This was a spiritual ascent literally from being a terrible imprisoned people who were not ready at all to receive what God had to give them.

They needed to go through a process of transformation.

- They had to learn to be free and to place value on being free.

## Seven Weeks to Sinai



This journey was a critical period where God revealed His holiness, guided them, and prepared them to become a holy nation with a role to play in the world.

Ex. 19:3-6 And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: <sup>4</sup> 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.

<sup>6</sup> And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

I Pet. 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,  
His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him  
who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

Powerful Truth: Jesus is all you need for the journey from your redemption to encountering  
God's presence. Jesus transforms life's bitter experiences into sweet blessings.

He is the Bread of Life and the Living Water to sustain and nourish you in the journey. His  
power can defeat the flesh in you. This is the journey to living the abundant life in Jesus Christ.  
Thank you for the journey. Look where you have brought me. I have encountered the work of  
the Holy Spirit in me. I bring a Freewill offering of gratitude.

Rom. 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your  
bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not  
be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you  
may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Ruth Chapter 1 covers 10 years.

Does the Holy Spirit seem to consider Ruth 2 of great significance? [Zeisler: One Fine Day]

Ruth 2:2-22 is the story of just one day. That should persuade us to listen very carefully to the  
details, to observe the scene, to wonder and enter into what these people experienced.

Key: Ruth is seeking grace. She is on the journey to become the Bride of Boaz.

### Scope of Chapter 2

Ruth 2:2 And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Please let me now go to the field,  
and glean among the ears of grain following one in whose eyes I shall find grace. [favor]

Ruth 2:21 Then Ruth the Moabitess said, "Furthermore, Boaz even told me to come back and  
stay with his servants until the entire harvest is completed."

This exchange occurs at the end of Ruth's first day of gleaning. It sets the stage for Ruth  
to stay and glean throughout both the barley and wheat harvests, all while living with Naomi.

Ruth 2:23 So Ruth worked alongside the women in Boaz's fields and gathered grain with them  
until the end of the barley harvest.

Then she continued working with them through the wheat harvest in early summer

Key: The story of Ruth poignantly represents these fifty days of crescendoing grain harvest.  
Ruth, a poor, foreign widow, entered Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

- The barley harvest represents the beginning of new life in Christ.
- From the beginning of the barley harvest you count the omer, 50 days, to the wheat harvest.
- Spiritual journey of growing into mature wheat: dying to oneself leads to abundant life.
- Time of spiritual preparation, reflection, purification, and growth to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit.

Key: Ruth is seeking grace. She is on her journey to become the Bride.

Ruth 2:2 And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Please let me now go to the field, and glean heads of grain following one in whose eyes I shall find grace. [favor]

Gleaning in those days was no easy task. The corner of the fields lay in a heavy thicket, and the fruits that remained were usually few, harder to find, and harder to pick. Couple this with the fact that Ruth lived in Israel during the time of the judges when great moral corruption and lawlessness ruled the people. In many ways this put her at risk. Ruth's decision to glean demonstrates the importance of taking initiative and working diligently. Her actions remind us that God often provides through our efforts and willingness to step out in faith.

Glean: #3950 =Laqat = picking up the leftovers; to gather slowly and laboriously, bit by bit.

Note: Willing to glean; spirit of humility; not assuming her right as a foreigner

- She is living off of what she did not plant > GRACE

Gleaning and Grace: "Please let me go into the field and glean heads of grain following one in whose eyes I shall find grace. [Words to Naomi]

- Joins the word to covenant kindness that reaches a Moabite and secures the lineage of David and Messiah. [Biblehub.org]

As Ruth comes into Boaz's field to glean barley, we can see a transformation from her earlier impoverished state. She continues to glean daily through the end of the wheat harvest.

Ruth contains eight uses of "glean" portraying the Moabite widow moving from marginalized gleaner to honored bride. Wow!

Ruth 2:3 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.*

- Significant: Boaz is a type of Jesus Christ, our Kinsman Redeemer.

Ruth 2:5-7 Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?"<sup>6</sup> 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. 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."

Unnamed Servant Who Was In Charge refers to an overseer whose special duty was to superintend the operations in the field, to supply provision to the reapers, and pay them for their labor in the evening. In Bible typology, the unnamed servant is often interpreted as a type of the Holy Spirit, as he acts as a representative and agent of his master, Boaz, who symbolizes Christ. He introduces Ruth to Boaz and facilitates the connection that leads to her redemption.

Reminder: The unnamed servant was there as the servant of Abraham who went to find a bride for the beloved son, Isaac. This is a picture of what the Holy Spirit is doing in the world today. He is looking for a Bride for the Son, Jesus.

Ruth may not have known it, but she was under inspection. The supervisor was looking at how she worked, and he was impressed that she did an excellent job.

Consider: In verse 2, Ruth stated she wanted to glean heads of grain.

In verse 3, she gleaned in the field after the reapers.

In verse 7, the unnamed servant says that Ruth wanted to glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.

Sheaves: 6016. Omer: daily sustenance during Israel's wilderness journey, refers to stalks of grain gathered and tied into a bundle after harvesting.

An omer was the daily allotment for a person.

Ex. 16:16 Moses said, "Gather as much as each of you needs, an omer for each person."

Whether individuals gathered much or little, "the one who gathered much had no excess, and the one who gathered little had no shortage" [Ex. 16:18]. The measure thus became a tangible lesson in divine equality: all Israel lived by grace, none lacking, none hoarding.

Ruth's request goes beyond the strict, legalistic letter of the law regarding gleaning in several keyways which highlight her humility, diligence, and respect rather than relying solely on her legal rights. While the Mosaic Law [Lev. 19:9-10, Deut. 24:19] allowed the poor and foreigners to gather leftovers *behind* the harvesters at the edge of the field, Ruth requested to gather *among the sheaves*. [want my daily allotment - omer]

Here is how her request exceeded the letter of the law:

- Asking Permission Instead of Taking Rights: As a poor widow and a foreigner, Ruth had a legal right to glean. However, instead of demanding her rights, she asked for permission ["I pray you/Please let me..."], showing a heart of humility and courtesy over entitlement.
- Gleaning Among the Sheaves: The law required leaving corners or dropped, stray stalks. Gleaning among the sheaves is an act of grace, where a landowner allows someone to pick from the gathered sheaves - the harvested, bound grain. This represents, symbolically, a, more bountiful, and secure provision compared to searching the fields for leftovers. Ruth asked to gather right "among the sheaves" which meant gathering the best, most recently cut grain immediately behind the harvesters, rather than just the scraps left at the edge.
- Exceptional Diligence - Work Ethic: The foreman reported that she worked from "morning until now" (evening), with only a short rest. This level of relentless, hard work went beyond the typical, leisurely effort of a casual gleaner.
  - Exemplifies the value of hard work and perseverance.

Ruth's request to glean "among the sheaves" suggests she sought permission to gather not just the leftovers on the ground but also among the bundles, indicating her boldness and initiative. This foreshadows her role in God's redemptive plan, as she becomes an ancestor of King David and, ultimately, Jesus Christ

Believers are called to "glean" from the Bible—extracting wisdom, truth, and promises that become their spiritual sustenance. This is what we live off of, what will sustain us, and it's how we'll grow. We can only be sustained as long as we are being fed.

Gleaning in God's Word is a daily activity. We must harvest new grain daily in God's field.

To glean scripture means to diligently study, gather, and pick up spiritual truths, insights, and wisdom bit-by-bit from the Bible. Many of us have read the Bible more times than we can count. However, there is always the potential of our gaining, or gleaning, new understanding.

As we reread Scripture, we can harvest a crop of concepts that we previously missed.

Specific verses may now be ripe for harvest.

There are kernels of truth waiting to be acquired that we previously left behind.

Standard gleaning might symbolize working for small amounts of knowledge or grace, whereas gleaning among the sheaves represents abundant, immediate access to "fine wheat" or divine truth.

It involves looking for deeper, scattered, or overlooked lessons beyond a surface-level reading.

The Holy Spirit takes us back to fields of faith so we can glean and gain deeper wisdom.

God is faithful to guide us to the exact field we need. He leads us to a few specific verses in a particular chapter and book of the Bible. He points us to good grain in the corners of His Word. He leaves nuggets of truth to be gleaned. He provides us spiritual nourishment.

May we be diligent to glean spiritual food in God's Word.