

INTERACTIVE TRAVEL GUIDE

DESTINATION: *Ruth*

The name of the book comes from one of the main characters, Ruth, whose name means friendship. There are two Bible books named for women and six that are named for their main characters (Joshua, Ruth, Samuel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther). The book of Ruth shows the godly courage and love of two very different women from different backgrounds. It also connects David's genealogy to Moab along with highlighting a Gentile thread running through Messiah's bloodline (Rahab the Canaanite and Ruth the Moabite).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

1446-1406 b.c.

The Israelites wander in the wilderness

1405-1400 b.c.

The conquest of Canaan

1380-1050 b.c.

The time of the Judges and the events of Ruth

1050 b.c.

Saul becomes king of Israel

1010 b.c.

David begins to reign at Hebron

1003 b.c.

David reigns all over Israel

970 b.c.

David dies and Solomon becomes King

TRIP PLANNER:

In the book of Ruth we see the story of romantic Grace lived through a type of Christ called the kinsman redeemer. Ruth is a Moabite woman whose husband has died. Naomi, her mother-in-law, invites her to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest where she meets Boaz. The book of Ruth tells the story of how Boaz becomes her kinsman redeemer.

1. Ruth's Decision to stay with Naomi – Ruth chapter 1
2. Ruth's Devotion to Serve Naomi – Ruth chapter 2
3. Ruth's Desire to See Redemption – Ruth chapter 3
4. Ruth's Destiny to secure a Legacy – Ruth chapter 4

PLACES OF INTEREST:

Bethlehem – Means “House Of Bread.” The city where the story of Ruth occurs.

Ephrathites – Ephrathah was another name for the region for Bethlehem.

Moab – Is the historical name for a mountainous strip of land in modern-day Jordan running along the eastern shore of the Dead Sea. In ancient times, it was home to the kingdom of the Moabites, a people often in conflict with their Israelite neighbors to the west. Moab occupied a plateau about 3,000 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, or 4,300 feet above the Dead Sea, and rising gradually from north to south. It was bounded on the west by the Dead Sea and the southern section of the Jordan River; on the east by Ammon and the Arabian desert, from which it was separated by low, rolling hills; and on the south by Edom.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST:

Boaz – He had quite the family line. He was the son of Rahab, the husband of Ruth and the great grandfather of King David. Boaz was a very wealthy man who lived in Bethlehem. When a destitute Naomi returned to Bethlehem with her widowed daughter-in-law, Ruth, Ruth went into the fields of Boaz to gather scraps of grain for their table. He acted kindly towards Ruth and instructed his farm workers to leave extra sheaves of barley for her to gather. Boaz learned that Ruth’s deceased husband was a distant relative of his. Ruth had another relative of her late husband who was closer than Boaz. By law, the other relative was obligated to marry Ruth, as stated in Deuteronomy 25:5-10. Boaz confronted the other relative with this law, and after the relative refused to marry Ruth, Boaz agreed to marry Ruth, and to buy the estate of Ruth’s deceased husband.

Chilion – The youngest son of Elimelech and Naomi. He married Orpah, died and left her a widow. His name means “Failing.”

Elimelech – Along with his family, this Jew (an Ephrathite) left the town of Bethlehem during a famine. He went to Moab where he died along with his two sons. His name means “God is King.”

Mahlon – The oldest son of Elimelech and Naomi. He married Ruth in Moab. He died and left her a widow. His name means “Sickly.”

Naomi – The wife/widow of Elimelech who would lose her husband and sons. She was left in a foreign land with her two daughters-in-law.

Obed – The son of Boaz and Ruth. He would become the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David. His name means “One Who Serves.”

Orpha – She became the widow of Chilion. After his death, she remained in Moab.

Ruth – A woman of great love and loyalty. She was a pagan in Moab, who through God's grace would accept the God of Naomi, the God of Israel and become the great grandmother of King David, and be a part of the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

FUN FACTS:

Barley fields in Bethlehem – The climate of the ancient land of Israel was a great medium for growing wild grain (wheat and barley); cool moist air from the Mediterranean stimulated early growth and maturity, before the hot dry "hamsin" winds (the same as our Santa Ana winds) from Africa and Arabia could parch their delicate forms. To enjoy the dense fields of wheat and barley, the Israelite harvesters had to be at the right place at the right time -- before the ripe ears of grain shattered at the time of maturity.

City gate in Bethlehem – Since gates were the center of city life, it is not surprising that scripture writers often described important officials as "sitting in the gate." Understanding the important role of city gates brings new light to many biblical stories: When God's angels arrived in Sodom, Lot was "sitting in the gateway," apparently serving as an influential judge in that evil city. Boaz went to the town gate to settle legal matters regarding his marriage to Ruth.

Messiah in Ruth – Messiah can be seen through Boaz who is presented as a type of kinsman redeemer. Like Jesus, he was both qualified and willing to redeem his people. The term "redeem" is used eight times in Ruth. Just as Boaz did for Ruth, Jesus became our Redeemer to pay all of our debts and our avenger who now defends us against our adversaries, our mediator to accomplish our reconciliation and He is the Bridegroom.

Near Kinsman – He was the unnamed close relative of Ruth who passed up the chance to marry her. In the King James Version, Boaz addresses him as "such a one".

Threshing floor in Bethlehem – Threshing Floors were used in the ancient world to separate grain from the chaff. It was a two-step process. First the stalks were spread on the threshing floor and crushed with either an oxen-pulled board with spikes to break the heads of grain from the stalks or with just oxen walking over it or by beating them with heavy sticks. The 2nd step was to use a pitchfork to toss the broken stalks into the air and let the wind blow the lighter chaff to the side while the grain fell directly back to the ground. The process is called winnowing.