



Overview for Ruth

Purpose: The Book of Ruth acts as a bridge between Judges and 1 and 2 Samuel.

Author: According to the Talmud, Samuel was the author. However, it seems clear, from the care the author makes in bringing out David's genealogy in Ruth 4:17-22, that the author must have lived in the time when David was thoroughly established on the throne of Israel. This was after the death of Samuel.

Date Written: The Book probably was written or completed in Jerusalem by a court historian during David's or possibly Solomon's reign.

History: In the early narratives and translations, Ruth and Judges were considered to be one book.

Setting: These events take place during the days of the judges—1375-1050 B.C. The narrative begins in Moab, a country, east of the Dead Sea, that oppressed Israel during the period of the judges.

Key People: Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz.

Summary: The Book of Ruth is a romantic yet historic view of a Moabite woman who became an important part in the lineage of Christ. The events of the book began when an Israelite family moved to the land of Moab to escape a famine in Israel. After a period of time, the father died. The two sons married Moabite wives. Then the sons died, leaving the mother, Naomi, and the two daughters-in-law, Ruth and

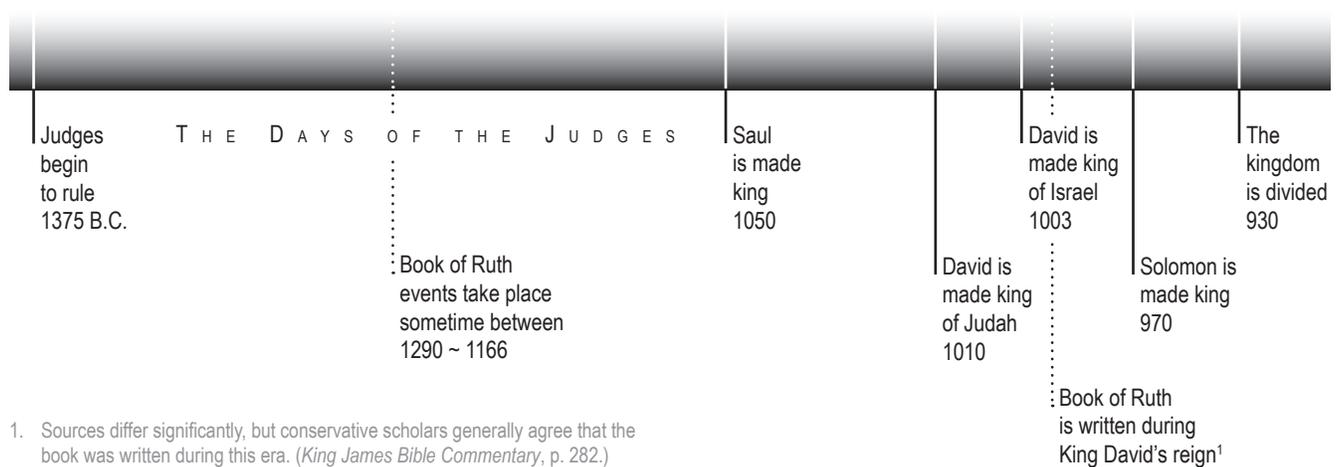
Orpah. Naomi longed to return to her roots, so she decided to go back to her homeland in spite of her love for Ruth and Orpah. She understood what it was like to be in a foreign land and did not encourage them to return with her. At Naomi's urging, Orpah stayed in Moab. Ruth, on the other hand, had bonded with Naomi and her God, and determined that she would accompany her mother-in-law back to Israel. This decision set the stage for a beautiful story of faithfulness, love, and marriage. It is included in the Bible because eventually the Messiah would come from the line of Ruth the Moabitess and her Israelite second husband, Boaz.

The account of Ruth provides a marvelous illustration of redemption. The Old Testament law made provision for women who, due to the death of their husbands, were left without heirs and faced the loss of their property. Both heirs (Deuteronomy 25:5-10) and property (Leviticus 25:25-28) were to be secured by a "close relative," or "kinsman redeemer." This law sanctioned the ancient custom of "brother-in-law" marriage. The account of Ruth illustrates its proper application.

The kinsman redeemer had to meet three qualifications: he must be a blood relative, he must be willing to redeem, and he must be able to pay the redemption price. This illustration of the kinsman redeemer is a beautiful picture of Christ, who met all these qualifications to redeem us.

Timeline

Many of these dates are approximate, as reference materials differ.



1. Sources differ significantly, but conservative scholars generally agree that the book was written during this era. (*King James Bible Commentary*, p. 282.)

Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.

- I. Ruth's resolve (1:1-22)
 - A. The setting (1:1-5)
 - B. The decision to return with Naomi to Judah (1:6-18)
 - C. The disgraceful return to Bethlehem (1:19-22)
- II. Ruth's unselfishness (2:1-23)
 - A. The request to glean in Boaz's field (2:1-7)
 - B. The provision of Boaz (2:8-17)
 - C. The report to Naomi (2:18-22)
 - D. The continued labor of Ruth (2:23)
- III. Ruth's appeal (3:1-18)
 - A. The plan of Naomi for Ruth's security (3:1-5)
 - B. The request of Ruth for Boaz to act as a kinsman-redeemer (3:6-15)
 - C. The report to Naomi (3:16-18)
- IV. Ruth's reward (4:1-22)
 - A. The redemption of Ruth by Boaz (4:1-12)
 - B. The marriage and prodigy of Ruth and Boaz (4:13-17)
 - C. The genealogy of David (4:18-22)