
Ruth—Preface

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Preface and Acknowledgment

Preface: I began this book back in the middle of the year 2000 and finished a couple months later. When I began writing this, I had already finished exegeting several books of the Bible, and several other portions of books, only two of which I was satisfied with the final result (the books of Joshua and Judges). The reason I began this approach of personal exegesis is that I was no longer being fed at church, and have thus far not found a single church which deals with God's Word in the detail and with the respect that I think is appropriate. After years of faithful church attendance, I began to do a great deal of the study for myself, until my church attendance decreased considerably and my personal study increased even more. This was not a choice I made lightly nor altogether consciously, nor is it a choice that I recommend to any other believer. Christians, apart from other Christians, tend to become antinomian or, at the very least, goofy and dogmatic. We are a group effort; however, there are times that a person has to leave the group for awhile—but that time is related to group effort, and that's where I am at this time. If you just flat out stop going to church, citing what I have written here and your unhappiness with your present church, you are a damned idiot who is just looking for any way out. There are outstanding study aides out there. To name two: the late J. Vernon McGee has a broadcast found in almost every single city in the United States and several places abroad where he goes through the Bible in five years, hitting every book, and a vast majority of the verses. Every believer should find where McGee is and listen faithfully for at least five years, if not ten. A second resource, if your church is not giving you what you need, is Bob Thieme. His tapes from the mid 60's through the mid 70's are extraordinary. You may not like him personally (which I didn't for about the first year that I listened to him), but he does some of the best Bible teaching that I have ever heard. One need not have financial concerns, as these tapes are sent out as needed, without regard to one's financial ability to support his ministry. I first heard about Bob when I was a very poor student in California. I listened to his tapes, was pissed off at him for several months (although I continued to listen), and listened to an hour of Bible teaching every single day for about the next twenty years. Not once during that time did I find myself added to some strange quasi-Christian mailing list as a result of my association with his ministry; nor did he even once send me a letter telling me the desperate straights that his ministry was in, and could I just send him whatever was in my heart. For a long time, I was unable to support his ministry, and later, I was able. I always received his tapes faithfully, regardless.

Acknowledgment: Don't think that I just got this whiff of inspiration and sat down to write and what resulted was this book of Ruth. I first of all had twenty years of teaching under the ministry of Robert B. Thieme Jr., for which I will be eternally grateful. He set me straight on hundreds of doctrines and pointed me in the right direction when it came to Biblical exegesis. What has impacted in particular with regards to this book is his teaching of dispensations. Now, EVERYONE in the community of believers is a dispensationalist. I have found that no matter how much a believer holds to the false doctrine of covenant theology, you can push that believer in to a corner where he will finally admit that some things were done differently in the Old Testament than are done now. That is the most fundamental tenant of theological dispensationalism, and all believers with any kind of an opinion will agree to this, if you push them hard enough (which I have done). From there, it is simply a matter of degree.

What you should do: the problem with most cults or believers who begin with the Old Testament is that they become confused in our relationship to the Law of God. Thieme's teaching kept me from falling into that sort of trap. If you are a brand new believer who wants to read the Bible for yourself, you should **never**, ever start in the book of Genesis (or, for that matter, with the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke or Acts). The place for the unbeliever or the new believer to start is at the very beginning of time, which is the book of John, the third book of the New Testament. From there, a study of the book of Romans would be imperative. However, even more

importantly, it is imperative for a new believer to find a place where God's Word is taught faithfully, regularly (three times a week is too few times), and primarily verse-by-verse. If your pastor does not do a great deal of verse-by-verse teaching, you are in the wrong church.

Now, it would be impossible to name all the shoulders that I stand upon, primarily because I don't know their names. However, I would venture to guess that I am standing on the shoulders of probably 2000-5000 believers who devoted their life to studying, to teaching, to archeology, to the written word; they no doubt had a great barrage of people who prayed on their behalf, acting as blockers for a quarterback. A great pastor might receive all the attention and admiration of his congregation, but what you never see is the hundreds and thousands of prayers offered on his behalf by ten times as many people which allow him to proceed. Any pastor who thinks he stands on his own is a fool. You may never know the names of the people who prayed on your behalf, or the blocking that they did on your behalf, but God knows, and these prayers will become a part of the permanent record in heaven.

Specific acknowledgments: let me be specific in terms of the people whom I know that I am beholden to. Had it not been for Bob Thieme's ministry, even though rarely I quote him throughout my exegesis, I doubt that I would even be doing this in the first place. Even if I had proceeded without his original direction, my exegetical approach would be a sorry shadow of what it is today. With respect to the Book of Ruth, I do not even recall if Bob covered that in his exegetical studies of Scripture. However, his dispensational approach to God's Word made it possible for me to easily drop this book into its particular slot in the history of God's dealings with man. In this particular study of the Book of Ruth, I quote extensively from two books by J. Vernon McGee. His wife's name was Ruth, and he apparently spent a good deal of time studying this book for that reason. The work which he did on this book is generally unrecognized, yet outstanding. When quoting the Bible, I primarily use the NASB, judging it to be one of the very best of the recent translations, hitting a tremendously well-placed midpoint between ultra literal and understandable. I rarely quote from it word-for-word, and for this I apologize. Often, when using the NASB, I give my bastardization of it. I tend to replace LORD with Jehovah, *shall* with *will*, and I take several other liberties as well. My intention is not to denigrate this excellent translation, nor to obfuscate the passage at hand, but to facilitate understanding. If a person is to own but one Bible, this should be it. I am also deeply beholden to Young's *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible*, Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*, Owen's extremely helpful *Analytical Key to the Old Testament* (my Old Testament crutch), the NIV as well as over a dozen other English translation of the Holy Scriptures. When it comes to commentaries, I have been lucky to have stumbled across Keil and Delitzsch's *Commentary of the Old Testament*, McGee's radio broadcasts converted into book form and *Barnes' Notes*. I would have been able to do nothing without my BDB Lexicon or Gesenius's excellent lexicon; and I have been so thankful for the use of Wigram's *The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament*. Obviously, I used Strong's Concordance as well. I can't let this go without mentioning *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976, which has been an outstanding resource for a lot of the nitty gritty material. In fact, for this study, I used roughly 100 different books and translations, and I tried to do my best to give credit where credit was due. I will list all of the authors from whom I specifically drew in the Bibliography section of this book; but my point is, I am standing on the shoulders of at least these 100 men (and any translation or book may have had multiple contributors). All of these men had training, had a Christian background, and learned what they learned from other teachers and authors who likewise stood upon the shoulders of hundreds, if not thousands, of dedicated men. And this is only an allusion to the people whom I can see, so to speak. Behind this are the prayers and financial support of thousands upon thousands of believers whose names will not be known to us until eternity. My point in all this is that we are a team effort. And when it comes to something which I have stated dogmatically and unequivocally that you disagree with, just get over it and move on. You will find out I was right in eternity, and, with some extensive studying, you may even come to that conclusion before then.

Translation: You may wonder how I have the nerve to present a translation of my own, and I wonder that myself sometimes. I am not a Hebrew scholar. I rely heavily upon the aides which have been made available to me which deal with the Massoretic text and the Hebrew pertaining thereto. I use Owen's *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*, and write a translation based upon that (I recall many of the Hebrew words by their BDB number). Both his translation, the BDB number, and the information given about each word helps me piece together a translation.

Then I check my translation against Young's and often against Rotherham's. When it comes to serious and sometimes not so serious disagreements, then I go to the various Lexicons and to *The New Englishman's Concordance*, as well as to several grammar books, and discuss the options from there. And, of course, there are times when a work is clear, but I like to bring it up so that it will be easy to work with it the next time that we see it. There are also nuances which I just feel are apropos to deal with and therefore, do so. Many people will find this aspect of this book tedious, and I fully understand, as I put forth the study and the work in the first place, so I know how difficult it can get. However, this is God's Word, and care must be given to its rendering. Part of my thinking here is that at some point in time, in the future, we of the church will be raptured and God will use some of this information for the Jewish evangelists who follow us.

Finally, one of the things which I need to mention, is that I will comment on other commentaries, other translations and other misinterpretations. I do this not to rain on someone else's parade, but in the interest of accuracy. Most believers own one, maybe two Bibles, and come to think of them as the greatest Bibles around. Some are brought up with the KJV, and think we should rely on no other (the old saying is: *if it was good enough for the Apostle Paul, it's good enough for me*). However, there are innumerable times where the KJV has an antiquated, undecipherable translation, or times when it is based upon an inferior manuscript—if we want the truth, we have to dig for the truth. The result, at times, is a Bible verse that we have memorized, liked, and might even be true, but is not what we find in the original language. My intention is to arrive at the most accurate translation possible, with an eye toward textual criticism. Now, many Bibles nowadays also offer commentary. The Scofield Reference Bible (which is the Bible I cut my teeth on), contains abbreviated notes and basic and advanced doctrines throughout. 99% of the time, Scofield is dead on accurate; however, when he isn't, I will let you know. Rotherham's *Emphasized Bible*, a tremendous work which is difficult to find, is one of the most helpful when it comes to alternative readings—however, it is by no means complete, and there are one or two footnotes which are entirely wrong (e.g., Judges 19:3, where he suggests that the Levite would bring *her* back, *her* referring to his mistress's *heart*). Furthermore, there are even times when the CEV or the TEV (of all translations) point out an important textual note which Rotherham misses. And when it comes to the NIV Study Bible—this is an outstanding value; there is a running almost verse-by-verse commentary throughout the Bible—however, there are times that they are wrong. If you have an NIV Study Bible, then I will let you know the few places where they are mistaken and I will, of course, explain why.

Gary Kukis
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Ruth Introduction

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The Romance of Ruth and Boaz

Introduction: In the Book of Ruth, we have a Jewish family, Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, leave Israel due to a famine, and move to Moab. Soon thereafter, the husband, Elimelech, dies. During the ten years that they live there, the two sons marry Moabite women and then they die themselves, leaving Naomi and her two Moabite daughters-in law, Ruth and Orpah.¹ When Naomi hears that God has blessed Israel again with crop production, she decides to return to Israel. Her daughters-in-law accompany to a certain point until Naomi urges them to go back. Ruth will not. She tells her mother-in-law, “Where you go, I will go; where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God will be my God.” (Ruth 1:16b). So they return together to Bethlehem in Judah, from where Naomi was from originally.

Ruth and Naomi were without husbands. Naomi was too old and Ruth was a widower and a Moabitess. In order to get enough food to eat, Ruth would go into the fields and glean grain after the harvesters had been through. It was a requirement of the Law for the owner of a field to leave some grain behind for the poor. While gleaning barley in the field of Boaz, Boaz sees Ruth and he makes provision for her. He instructs his servants to allow her to glean the grain right behind them, so that she will be safe; and he allows her to drink from the water provided for them. He also has lunch with her and tells her that he knows of her sacrifices that she has made to care for her mother-in-law, Naomi. When she tells Naomi of this, Naomi reveals that Boaz is a relative of theirs and Ruth continues to glean the grain through the barley and wheat harvests.

Then Naomi tells Ruth what to do. She is to clean herself up and, after Boaz has fallen asleep, to sleep at his feet, indicating a subservience to him, as well as a desire to be married to him. Boaz is pleased, but, by law and by custom, the closest relative of a widowed woman is to marry and then impregnate her, and the first child is brought up with the name of her first husband, so that his name is not blotted out from history and so that his land inheritance is not lost. Boaz does know of a man who is a closer relative.

Boaz meets the man in the public forum, calls witnesses to observe, and then discusses the options. This man has the opportunity to buy Ruth’s late husband’s property in a distress sale—and the man is all for that. Then, when he finds out that Ruth is part and parcel of the package, he backs off. This is all duly and legally recorded; then Boaz marries Ruth and their first son is named Obed, and Naomi plays a major part in raising him. This is where the Book of Ruth ends, apart from noting the genealogical line, which traces Perez (a son of Judah’s) through Boaz and Obed, and ending with Jesse, who fathers David.

The Book of Ruth is centered around the union of a Jew and a Gentile and culminates in the birth of King David. The inclusion of the rejected Gentiles in the inheritance and redemption of God tells us that the Messiah is not only the Savior of Israel, but of the entire human race.²

Purpose of the Book of Ruth: A lot of people falsely give the purpose of the Book of Ruth as to fill the gap in the line of David. Although it is nice that we get this piece of history about David’s background, it does not fill in all of the gaps, as we have missing generations between Obed and Jesse.

The Book of Ruth is not merely an appendix to the Book of Judges. *It shows that in the darkest days, God was working out his purposes in the lives of individuals who were rightly related to him. God is always interested in the private affairs of humble folk, and this book tells how he moved in their lives. God touched the simple lives of these*

¹ No one names their daughter Orpah anymore—why is that?

² Paraphrased in part from *New American Standard Bible, Study Edition*; A. J. Holman Company, ©1975 by The Lockman Foundation, p. 267.

unknown village folk and made them sublime. The Book of Ruth is a pearl in the swine pen of the judges. When God touched the lives of these pastoral people, he brought them into the light of his program for eternity.³

On one hand, it is a book about the great love and devotion that Ruth had toward her mother-in-law, although the word *love* is found only once in the entire book (Ruth 4:15). Just as important, it focuses in on the idea of redemption, a word which occurs 23 times in the Book of Ruth.

The Book of Ruth is often seen as a shadow of the church today. Israel has fallen out of favor with God (the famine) and has been scattered into the world (Elimelech and his family), and, during this time, a Gentile woman, Ruth, is brought into grace. Through the death of a loved one, Israel is restored to the land, and the Gentile woman is brought into the land. A close relative of Ruth's late husband then marries her, bringing great blessing to both Naomi, a Jewess, and to Ruth, a Gentile. Mahlon is seen as a type of Christ, in that he died. Boaz is also seen as a type of Christ, in that he provided for both the Jew and the Gentile, as a kinsman-redeemer, and thereby brought blessing to them both. **There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And since you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise** (Gal. 3:28–29). **You were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus, you who were formerly afar off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, Who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall by abolishing in His flesh the enmity—the Law of Commandments and the Ordinances—that, in Himself, He might make the two into one new man, establishing peace; and that He might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by having put to death the enmity** (Eph. 2:12–16). One of the few things that we now about Boaz is that he was considerably older than Ruth. He apparently was an honorable and successful man that women had, insofar as we know, rejected him as husband material. This Gentile woman, a picture of the Church, pursues him. Christ had been rejected by Israel, and became the corner foundation stone between Israel and the Church (the Gentiles). **"The Stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone."** (Luke 20:17b Psalm 118:22).

Finally, and most importantly, in the Book of Ruth, we have the picture of Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer. In fact, although we find many types of Christ throughout Scripture, only Boaz illustrates our Lord's function on our behalf as our kinsman-redeemer. This is a man who is related by marriage to the one who needs to be redeemed. On the one hand, he is a legal, but not blood relative. Our Lord, in His hypostatic union, is legally related to us as the son of Joseph who is not the son of Joseph. God the Holy Spirit is His Father. Boaz, as a relative of Mahlon, was so related to Ruth and Naomi. Furthermore, Boaz purchased this relationship with Ruth, paying Naomi for her land, yet raising up children of Mahlon, the husband who had died, unto this inheritance. Our Lord has purchased us from the *slave market of sin*⁴ with His blood, and we are also raised up as children of our Lord Who died. We will go into this relationship in greater depth when we exegete the book of Ruth. However, one aspect of the Book of Ruth which helps us to better grasp redemption is the love of Boaz for Ruth. Redemption is not simply a financial transaction. Boaz redeemed Ruth because he loved her. Our Lord redeems us out of love. It is this book which elevates redemption to an act of love rather than a simple legal transaction. Once we have finished putting together all the instances of foreshadowing, as a New Testament believer, you will find it impossible to ever question the inclusion of the Book of Ruth in the canon of Scripture.

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False Purposes Given for the Book of Ruth: When dealing with the Bible, there is going to be a lot of human viewpoint. This is what we have in these various purposes. Apart from the true understanding of this book and what it represents, a person is hard-pressed to understand its purpose and its inclusion in the canon of Scripture. Some maintain that it was written as a post-exilic tract to combat the narrow exclusivism said to have been

³ J. Vernon McGee, *Ruth, the Romance of Redemption*; Thru the Bible Books, ©Pasadena, California, pp. 8–9.

⁴ Some of Thieme's terminology.

introduced by Ezra and Nehemiah, in particular their legislation on mixed marriages (e.g., Neh. 10:30–13:23–27).⁵ As ZPEB points out, apart from the several mentions of Ruth's national origin, that is certainly not the thrust of this book.

A second purpose offered was the plea for the extension of the Levirate marriage (where the brother of a deceased man marries his widow). Although this no doubt occurred, the number of times that this occurred would have been minuscule, and not enough to warrant the writing of a book to show support for this practice. Furthermore, the practice had already been clearly endorsed by Moses in Deuteronomy, so an additional book did not really add to such a practice. Furthermore, this is just not the thrust of the book.

Rabbis have described Ruth as the perfect proselyte to Judaism, and that this is a marvelous recording of such a conversion—however, the details in the Book of Ruth which would confirm such a theory are not to be found. Ruth does give a marvelous statement of faith in the God of Naomi, but we find little emphasis upon the Law nor do we find quotations from the books of Moses.

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Time Frame: Reese and Klassen put the time frame of the book of Ruth in the mid-1200's. *The Narrated Bible* places the time period of Ruth at 1100 B.C. Josephus places the events of this book during the time of Eli, which would have been at the end of the period of the judges (again, around 1100 B.C.). Zodhiates concurs, placing these events circa 1130 B.C. the reason generally given for this time period is that a famine is mentioned at the beginning of the book of Ruth, and there was a famine brought about by the Midianites during the time of Gideon. Therefore, the two are thought to be the same. The fact that Gideon threshed grain in the valley, as did Boaz, was another indication that these events occurred coterminously.

The conquering of the land took place around 1400 B.C. During that time period, Rahab the harlot turned against her people and supported the Israelites in their attack upon the land. She helped the Israelites conquer Jericho, the first fortress-city that they came to. This obviously had to take place after the land had been conquered, and during a time when the land was under some sort of discipline (hence the famine). Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, was married to Elimelech and she had two children. These were the only ones who could inherit the land which fell into the hand of Naomi. This was the land designated for the family of Elimelech. Since there were only three males total in this immediate family, the indication is that this took place early on the period of the judges. Therefore, I would place this in the early to mid-1300's (which would coincide with the oppression of Israel under Moab).

There are others, Keil and Delitzsch included, who place this book during the time of Gideon, correlating the famine with Judges 6:3–4. As we studied, this would place us very early in the 12th century B.C. Although this is not an impossible scenario, the time of oppression of the Midianites which preceded the deliverance of Gideon was a mere seven years, whereas the family of Elimelech remained in Moab for ten years. I certainly would not rule this out, but it is not my first choice for the time period of the events of Ruth.

Finally, there are still others, such as Alfred Edersheim, who place the events of this book at the end of the period of the judges. He seems to take this position primarily because this is also the opinion of Josephus.

In any case, the events of this book took place, as the NIV Study Bible puts it, *in the time of the judges, a time characterized...as a period of religious and moral degeneracy, national disunity and general foreign oppression. Like I Samson 1–2, it gives a series of intimate glimpses into the private lives of the members of an Israelite family. It also presents a delightful account of the remnant of true faith and piety in the period of the judges, relieving an otherwise wholly dark picture of that era.*⁶

⁵ Paraphrased from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 5, p. 176.

⁶ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 360.

The mistake that most people make is that they take the genealogy and work backwards and then place a date on the events of the Book of Ruth. That is simply the wrong way to go about it, and, as we examine this genealogy, it will become apparent that reasoning from the end back to the beginning is the wrong way to go. We will see that, in order to properly place the events of this book in time, that we will need to begin in the middle of the genealogy and work forward in time.

Salmon to Boaz: At some point in time soon after Israel's capture of the Land of Promise, Rahab (Joshua 2) married an Israelite, Salma (or, Salmon) and bore him a child, Boaz (Ruth 4:21 | Chron. 2:11 | Matt. 1:4–5 | Luke 3:32). Because of the language used in Scripture, it is not clear whether Boaz is actually the son of Salmon or a grandson or a great grandson. It is because of this that the dates given for the book of Ruth vary so greatly. Personally, I believe that Boaz was the son of Salmon and Rahab, which would place the book of Ruth near the beginning of the time of the judges. In fact, it is more than just an opinion, but I base this upon the tenor of Matt. 1:4–5. Throughout this chronology, when a man and woman are both mentioned, Matthew then gives the name of their literal son. It makes no sense to mention the mother if the descendant spoken of is simply a grandson or great grandson. Matthew speaks of Boaz being the son of Salmon through Rahab, meaning that we are speaking of a literal son.

Now, given that Rahab was a successful business woman, we would have to put her age at mid-20's at the youngest. It would be reasonable for her to be married before 1390 B.C. and to have borne a son by 1380 B.C. If her son was Boaz, we might make him out to be 50–60 (in Ruth 3:10, what he says indicates that he is significantly older than Ruth). Most of the authors who have placed a date on the oppression of the Moabites in the early 1300's (not those, of course, who *short-date* the time period of the judges). I place the Moabite oppression as running from 1342–1244 B.C. In other words, given that Boaz is the son of Salmon, then the Book of Ruth, which deals with the relationship between a Moabite woman and an Israelite family, took place during the Moabite oppression. This is not unreasonable. There is no reason that the book of Ruth has to take place during the Moabite oppression and no reason to prevent that from being the case. Moab collected tribute from Israel, and, therefore, a lot of Israelites hated the Moabites. However, if a man is starving, and he is unable to support his family, and if he thinks he can support them in Moab, he is going to move there despite how others feel about Moab. And, just because Israel is paying tribute to Moab, does not mean that travel between the two countries is unheard of. Throughout the roughly 100 books which I use as reference, only one other person agreed with me on this time period—that is, only one other person correctly determined the time frame of this book—some guy named Lawson from the 1800's.⁷

Boaz to Obed: Given the dates in the previous paragraph, this would give us roughly 1320 B.C. as the time of the birth of the child of Ruth and Boaz, Obed. Now, it is clear that Obed is the son of Boaz and Ruth and not a grandson (Ruth 4:13–17). If Boaz is not the son, but the grandson or great grandson of Salmon, then we can add an additional 60–100 years to our figures, placing the birth of Obed in the early 1200's.

Obed to Jesse: Obed sired Jesse (Ruth 4:17, 22 | Chron. 2:12 | Matt. 1:5 | Luke 3:32). The language here allows for Obed to be Jesse's father, grandfather, or great grandfather. Furthermore, this is the only place where we can insert a generation or two in the genealogy which is given. Now, if there was no gap, the earliest possible date for Jesse's birth would be 1280 B.C. However, because there could be a gap between Obed and Jesse, we could add as much as 200 (or more) years, putting the birth of Jesse at, say, 1080 B.C. Given what follows, the latter date makes the most sense.

Jesse to David: David really is the son of Jesse (1 Sam. 16). Since David is the last-born of eight children, that could make his birth at, say 1220 B.C., which is unlikely. Therefore, there must be some gaps in the given chronology. Mid-1000's for the birth of David fits in with the information given and with his reign.

You may question that, in no fewer than four places, we have the exact same list of generations between Salmon and David, which may cause you to think that there can be no gaps, as these chronologies all agree. Not necessarily so, as these chronologies can have a common origin (they could all be based upon the book of Ruth

⁷ Lawson and Carson, *An Exposition of Ruth and Esther*; ©Tyndale Bible Society, Florida; p. 6. Lawson places the time frame during the rule of Ehud, the Moabite, over Israel.

or the Chronicles). Scripture tends to focus in on what is important, and the inclusion of two great spiritual women in the line of Jesus is important. The way that God chose David was important. Since the period of the judges was a time of degeneration, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the men who fell between Obed and Jesse were insignificant. Therefore, in the line where we have Rahab and Salmon → Boaz and Ruth → Obed → Jesse → David, we have three clear father and son relationships: Salmon is the father of Boaz, Boaz is the father of Obed and Jesse is the father of David.

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Jehovah-Elohim in the book of Ruth: In the three of the four books of Moses, perhaps 60% of the verses are direct quotations from God. In Deuteronomy, Moses speaks directly to the people, obviously inspired by the Holy Spirit. In the books of Joshua and Judges, the Word of Jehovah makes limited appearances, and several of those it is difficult to discern the form in which He came. However, in the Book of Ruth, Jehovah-Elohim does not appear as an angel and there is good reason for that. The Angel of Jehovah does not appear in the book of Ruth because Boaz represents to us our Savior-Redeemer. Having an appearance of the Angel of Jehovah would have confused the issue. At the same time, this book is filled with references to God—of the 85 verses of this book, including a short genealogy at the end, God's name, in its various forms, is found 23 times.

The Inclusion of Ruth in the Line of Christ: Women generally were not mentioned in the line of the Messiah—in fact, they were generally not mentioned in genealogies at all (note, for instance, Ruth 4:21 | 1 Chron. 2:11–13 | Luke 3:23–38). Matthew was a Jewish tax collector who knew and studied God's Word. He was an outcast insofar as the other religious Jews were concerned, even though he knew the Law better than they do (the Gospel of Matthew is filled with Old Testament references). Because he was an outcast, he carefully included certain women in the line of our Lord, as they were outcasts as well. Their inclusion was not simply a *so there* on Matthew's part, but they were included by God the Holy Spirit as a testimony to their faith. And let me make it clear that none of these women were perfect. Bathsheba, as you may recall, although in the line of Christ, committed adultery with David. The fact that any person was in the line of our Lord is a testimony to God's grace.

Authorship: Of all of the books of the Old Testament, the Book of Ruth is probably the most difficult book when it comes to determining authorship. Traditionally, according to the Talmud, the authorship of this book is credited to Samuel—however, some say that the inclusion of the genealogical line to David could reasonably exclude Samuel as too early. He died before the coronation of David (1 Sam. 25:1). On the other hand, it was Samuel who, at God's direction, chose David to be king over Israel when David was simply a young shepherd. Therefore, Samuel did not need to see the coronation of David as he had performed the true coronation of David decades earlier (compare 1 Sam. 15:22–23 | 16:1–3, 11–12). For this reason, I would not rule out Samuel as the final author.

Because of the phrase *the field of Moab* or *the fields of Moab* as opposed to *the country of Moab*, Barnes postulates that the author was not a Moabite (which thus eliminates Ruth).⁸ Whereas, this is reasonable, it does not absolutely exclude Ruth. I would not be surprised if Naomi first began telling this story to Obed, her grandson, and that it was told for several generations before being recorded. On a similar note, there is no reason to rule out Boaz as the original author either.

However, there are several phrases found throughout the Book of Ruth which are both well-integrated into the story, and yet given the impression that this book was composed long after the fact. The genealogy mentioned at the end certainly could have been tacked on—that takes us to the time of David. However, the giving of the sandal from the relative who refused to redeem to Boaz was spoken of as an ancient custom in the context of that verse (Ruth 4:7), indicating that this was no longer done. The book begins telling us that these events took place during the time of the judges, indicating that time had passed (Ruth 1:1). These few phrases, which appear to be well integrated into the narrative, indicate the author wrote at a much later date than the events of the book. This would give credence to Samuel's authorship (or to the final authorship of a later writer).

⁸ Barnes' Notes, Volume 2, reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 473. It is more common to find *the field of Ammon* (or some other non-Israelite country) as well as *the country* or *the land of Israel*.

My own opinion is that one of the principal characters of the book (or one of the early descendants, e.g. Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David) originally wrote this book. By the time of David, its spiritual import became obvious, and an author during that time (e.g., Samuel) wrote it all down (including the tacking on of the genealogy at the end, to account for the book's importance).

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Origin of the Book of Ruth: This is an extremely tough one. Barnes suggests that there was a family book for the house of Perez, which contained various historical incidents involving the family, as well as their family lineage. Barnes theorizes that the Book of Ruth was drawn from this.

The Name of the Book of Ruth: *Ruth* is one of the longest standing Gentile names. It is simply the transliteration of the Hebrew (which was also transliterated into the Greek and Latin). In the Hebrew, it is *rûwth* (רוּת) [pronounced *rooth*]. It is possible that this is a Moabite word taken from a Hebrew word which means *friendship, association*.⁹ Strong's #7327 BDB #946.

The Time of Writing: The Book of Ruth begins with the phrase [Now it was in the days when judges judged...](#) This indicates that at least final draft of this book was written during the monarchy (or, even later). Although an argument could be made to allow the final draft to be earlier, as the rule of the judges would be in contrast to the leadership of Moses and Joshua; it is more likely that this was written after some perspective could be placed on this time period, which would be during the period of monarchy in Israel.

There was a custom of one man giving another a sandal to indicate that he relinquished his interest in a piece of property and was exercising his right of first refusal. Although this was similar to Mosaic Law, it was not in exact accordance with the Law. Such an event occurs in Ruth 4:7, and it is represented as a tradition which was followed in former times—again, indicating that the final draft of this book was written much later than the events of the book.

Furthermore, at the end of the book, we have two genealogies listed, one running from Boaz to David, which appears to be a part of the story; and the second tracing further back to Perez, a son of Judah, down through David, which genealogy could have been tacked on later. However, the portion of the genealogy which appears to be integral to the story of Ruth would imply that Ruth was written during the time of David or Solomon.

Barnes notes that some of the language of this book includes words of a Chaldee form or origin, and he therefore places the final writing of *Ruth* late in the Jewish monarchy. Others claim that the classical style and language indicate that this book was written very early in Israel's history.¹⁰

These comments which indicate that the book was written later than the events of the book are fairly well-integrated into the style and progression of the book. This is a minor problem. The Book of Ruth is not a document that one would draw from several different sources. It is primarily a personal recollection of events. We do not know if this was a story which was handed down verbally (in general, I despise the concept of the *oral tradition* which was wrongly foisted on Scripture). However, considering its brief length, it would not be out of the question for this to have been passed down orally for a few generations and then finally recorded—perhaps even by David—several hundred years later. The only reason that I suggest this, again, is that the clues that this occurred long before this book was written are well-integrated into the story itself. They do not appear to be additions or clarifications of a story which is already in existence. Let me add one more thing: I am offering you an educated guess here, not a definitive pronouncement.

What would be very likely is for the story to have been written down and then passed down throughout the generations. When it became clear that the marriage between Ruth and Boaz resulted in the eventual birth of David, that genealogical line was tacked onto the end of the book as the final draft was written. There may have

⁹ This is suggested by *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 354.

¹⁰ *The New Bible Dictionary*; editor J. D. Douglas; ©Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1962; ©by W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; p.1109.

been some changes in the style of writing in the final draft; however, recognizing the importance of the book of Ruth would have kept any copyist from changing the facts of the story. In my opinion, the first 3½ chapters remain unchanged from its first draft.

Some have tried to date this book according to the observation of the Levirate marriage and then associate that with the observance or non observance of how it was set forth in Deuteronomy—however, no matter how that is done, the result is flawed. The Laws of Moses were sometimes followed and sometimes not followed. We cannot therefore determine the date of writing or the date of the events based upon the compliance or noncompliance to the Mosaic Law.

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Providence of God: At first glance, one can read this book and wonder, *what's up with that?* It appears, on the surface, to be almost an insignificant book which certainly deals with real problems, but with actually problems which are on a very small scale. However, one of the many lessons of this book is that God is interested and involved in what might seem to be the relatively trivial events of our lives and with people who appear to be unimportant. After all, you don't look at the beggar on the corner with the hand-printed sign and look upon his life as significant. At most, he is a sad reminder as to the frailty and apparent capriciousness of life. All of our lives are important to God and the incidents which occur in our lives are carefully monitored by God.

One of the most important issues of the Book of Ruth is the providence of God. God is with us every step of our journey on this earth. Naomi seems lost. She faces famine with her husband and two children, and next finds herself in Moab. All of her security is suddenly gone. Her husband dies, as do her two grown sons, and she is left with two daughters-in-law; and, in the ancient world, for whatever reasons you want to attribute to it, the women were almost helpless without men to provide for them. In all of these losses, Jehovah-God was looking over Naomi, and taking care of her, although at times, this did not seem to be the case. In Ruth 1:20, she cries to her friends in Bethlehem, [“Do not call me Naomi \[pleasant\], call me Mara \[bitter\], for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.”](#)

This book is such an incredible parable to Israel today. Naomi is Israel. Israel was put out of the land and, outside of the land, has lost everything, and is in a hopeless situation. Even when she returned to her homeland, Naomi was still bitter and in a hopeless situation. God has not completely cast down Israel. Israel may appear to be in a hopeless situation. There may be times when the average Jew looks to God in bitterness, asking, “How can you let this happen to us?” God was with Naomi every step of the way; God is with the Jew every step of his life. The solution to Naomi's loss is Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer; the solution to the losses suffered by the Jews is Christ Jesus, their Kinsman-Redeemer.

Canonicity: The inclusion of the Book of Ruth with the canon of Scripture is tied inexorably to its purpose. Prior to the incarnation of our Lord, the only reason that we can determine that this book was placed into the canon was God's personal direction. We don't find it quoted anywhere; the only portion of the book alluded to is the genealogy which is tacked on the end. Interestingly enough, we do not even find the Book of Ruth listed among the Antilegomena, which are the only books of the Old Testament whose canonicity was ever brought into question.¹¹ We do not know who the author is, so we cannot claim that it is inspired based upon authorship. The final form of this book appears to be written long after the fact—perhaps two or three centuries later—which also makes it questionable. In fact, apart from the fulfillment of the foreshadowing of our Lord in this book, it is truly amazing that the Israelites included this in the canon of Scripture. However, one of the key themes in the Book of Ruth is the providence of God; and, quite similarly, the key to its inclusion in the Old Testament canon is the providence of God. From a human standpoint, apart from the New Testament, there is no other explanation as to why this book was included in the canon of Scripture. Yet, according to ZPEB: *The canonicity of Ruth has never been seriously questioned.*¹²

¹¹ These books would be Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezekiel and Proverbs.

¹² *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 5, p. 178.

In the Bible, we have many men and many sets of circumstances which foreshadow the coming of our Lord and His work on the cross. There was Abraham offering as a sacrifice his own son; there was Moses, the great deliverer; there was David—however, no incident and no man has ever portrayed our Lord as the kinsman-redeemer except for Boaz. The person who reads through their Bible once a year might skim through this Book of Ruth and think that it is such a nice and romantic book, but never have a real clue as to why this book found its way into the canon of Scripture, inspired by the Holy Spirit. However, the key is Boaz—when you fully understand who Boaz is, the kinsman-redeemer of Ruth, then you realize how absolutely essential this book is to the Old Testament canon.

McGee give us four reasons why a book should be included in the canon of Scripture: historical significance, dispensational clarification, genealogical information, and doctrine.¹³ Ruth should be a part of the canon of Scripture for all four reasons.

Ruth was considered to be a part of the Hebrew canon of Scripture, however, most would be hard-pressed to explain why. It's a nice and a sweet story, and a young Gentile woman does profess her faith in Jehovah-God of Israel. Furthermore, some of the gaps of the line of David are filled in. However, nowhere do we find the voice of God speaking from the heavens making proclamations of Law or giving the warnings of prophecy. Once we get to the New Testament, then it all makes sense. This love story between Boaz, a man of God and a rich and successful Israelite, and Ruth, a Gentile woman with nothing, parallels God's love for the Church and His relationship to the Church. There is perhaps no other illustration in Israel's history which more closely portrays Christ's relationship to the Church and Israel.

As we will see, there are two different men who could have redeemed Ruth—the closer relative (to her husband Mahlon) did not choose to redeem her and the land of Naomi because he did not love her. Although he will make up some lame excuse in Ruth 4:6, the real reason that he does not act as the kinsman redeemer is because he did not love Ruth. Boaz was all too happy to redeem Ruth and the land, because he loved Ruth. As we have seen, she should have been unlovable to Boaz, being a foreign woman from a country which was often in conflict with Israel, and being a woman without substance. However, despite all of that, Boaz loved her. I would be hard-pressed to find anything in me that Jesus would love—however, Scripture tells me that His motivation to die for our sins was love for us. Boaz and his love for the Moabite woman brings Scripture down to a level where even I can begin to understand what Christ did on my behalf as well as why He died for my sins. McGee explains: *...the book of Ruth reveals the love side of redemption. Here is a man who is a kinsman redeemer, but her doesn't have to act in that capacity. We'll find out there's another kinsman who was actually a nearer relative than Boaz, and he had the opportunity to take action, but he turned it down. He doesn't care for Ruth, but you see, Boaz loved her. That makes the difference. Now God didn't have to redeem us. We were lost sinners. If He did not redeem us, He could still be a just and holy God. But He loved us. You see, salvation by redemption is a love story. And now we have it told here in simple language illustrated by this little foreign girl from Moab and Boaz in the land of Israel.*¹⁴

What we have in the Book of Ruth is actually the great story of our redemption. It is an almost exact parable, just as we find in Gen. 22, of the price that was paid for our salvation. It begins with estrangement and death, and living outside the Land of Promise. It involves Gentiles and Jews, the Jews living in the land of the Gentiles. This story involves a Jewess who believes that God has deserted her. In this story, we have one who substitutes for Ruth's husband, a man who looks over her and provides for her even when she is not aware. At the end, we have their union and a rebirth. This book, as a picture of our salvation, is so dead-on, as to be eerie. At the end of this book, we will pull all of this together and you will be amazed as to how closely this parallels our own salvation.

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Location in the Canon: In the Hebrew Bible, Ruth is found in the Kethubim, which is the collection of writings which were read during specific feast days (these were Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and

¹³ Paraphrased from J. Vernon McGee, *Ruth, the Romance of Redemption*; Thru the Bible Books, ©Pasadena, California, p. 6.

¹⁴ J. Vernon McGee, *Ruth*, Thru the Bible Radio, ©1976 in La Verne, California, p. 45.

Esther). This is a fairly eerie placement, actually, as the Song of Solomon speaks of Solomon pursuing the one who was probably his right woman, but Solomon was too involved with other women for things to work out (Solomon is **not** the shepherd lover in this poem). Generally speaking, Israel did not have a good relationship with Jehovah God. The Book of Ruth speaks of the kinsman-redeemer who redeems both Israel and the Gentiles, Who is Christ Jesus. Lamentations are the sad writings of Jeremiah for Israel being carried away captive. Ecclesiastes speaks of human viewpoint, which is the philosophical and religious thinking of Israel today. Finally, Esther speaks of the preservation of the Jews under Gentile rule. These books roughly correspond with the history of Israel, the Book of Ruth speaking of the incarnation of our Lord.

There are some who believe that Judges, Ruth, Samuel and Kings were originally one book.¹⁵ Clearly, the Book of Ruth is tied to the book of Judges by Ruth 1:1 (...*in the days of the judges...*) and to the book of Samuel by the final genealogy, tracing Perez, the son of Judah, all the way to David. This makes its placement at the end of the Book of Judges in the English, Greek and Latin Bibles most logical. Now, Zodhiates, interestingly enough, maintains that Ruth was originally a part of the book of Judges, much like the other two appendices, which was later moved in the Hebrew canon to the Kethubim, also known as the Five Megilloth (or, the Five Scrolls). This apparently was the contention of Josephus and has been the subject of a long-standing debate.¹⁶ Now, I don't know that I want to rehash these arguments, other than to say there are serious questions as to the official number of books in the Old Testament, and to agree that, even though the book of Ruth took place during the time of the judges, it stands apart from the other two appendices with respect to its vocabulary and style, its literary independence, its self-contained literary nature (i.e., it does not act like an addendum to another book), and its look backward into time. It would make little sense for the Jews of old to actually excise this book from the book of the Judges and move it to a different location in their canon. However, what does make sense is that this was written as a completely independent literary unit.

Pentecost: The Book of Ruth was read during the Feast of Pentecost (also known as the Feast of Weeks). Pentecost is, in part, the celebration of the harvest and since the book of Ruth takes place during the barley harvest, it was read during this time. Similarly, the Song of Solomon was read during Passover; Lamentations on the 9th day of the month Ab, which marks the destruction of Jerusalem; Ecclesiastes during the Feast of the Tabernacles; and Esther during Purim.

From a Literary Standpoint: NIV Study Bible: *The book of Ruth is a Hebrew short story, told with consummate skill. Among historical narratives in Scripture, it is unexcelled in its compactness, vividness, warmth, beauty and dramatic effectiveness—an exquisitely wrought jewel of Hebrew narrative art.*¹⁷

The NIV Study Bible also presents the organization of this book as very symmetrical:

- I. Introduction: Naomi is emptied (Ruth 1:1–5)
- II. Naomi returns from Moab (Ruth 1:6–22). *Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the land of Moab* (Ruth 1:6a)
 - A. Ruth clings to Naomi (Ruth 1:6–18)
 - B. Ruth and Naomi return to Bethlehem (Ruth 1:19–22)
- III. Ruth and Boaz meet in the harvest fields (Ruth 2). *Now Naomi had a redeemer of her husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz* (Ruth 2:1)
 - A. Ruth begins work (Ruth 2:1–7)
 - B. Boaz shows kindness to Ruth (Ruth 2:8–16)
 - C. Ruth returns to Naomi (Ruth 2:17–23)
- IV. Ruth goes to Boaz on the threshing floor (Ruth 3). *Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, “My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you?”* (Ruth 3:1)
 - A. Naomi instructs Ruth (Ruth 3:1–5)

¹⁵ William Smith, LL.D., *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; Fleming H. Revell Company, ©1970, p. 585.

¹⁶ This debate is covered in greater detail in Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, pp. 340–341.

¹⁷ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 361.

- B. Boaz pledge to secure redemption on behalf of Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 3:6–15)
- C. Ruth returns to Naomi (Ruth 3:16–18)
- V. Boaz arranges to marry Ruth (Ruth 4:1–12)
 - A. Boaz confronts the unnamed kinsman (Ruth 4:1–8). *Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there, and, observe, the redeemer of whom Boaz spoke was passing by* (Ruth 4:1a)
 - B. Boaz buys Naomi's property and marries Ruth (Ruth 4:9–12)
- VI. Conclusion: Naomi is filled (Ruth 4:13–17)
- VII. Epilogue: the genealogy of David (Ruth 4:18–22)¹⁸

There is a series of contrasts in this book, some of which are obvious, and others of which are hidden. Elimelech takes his family out of Bethlehem, which means *the House of Bread*, because they are starving. We have the obvious contrast between Ruth and Boaz: Ruth is a poor, young Moabitess, who has nothing, and picks up the leftover grain dropped in whatever field she finds herself; she is an alien to the town of Bethlehem; Boaz is a rich, but older Israelite, who owns land and has servants working for him, and is well-established in Bethlehem. We have the contrast in the name of Naomi, which means *pleasant*; and she tells the people she meets in Bethlehem to call her *Mara* instead, which means *bitter*. She left Israel *full*, but returned *empty* (the purpose of leaving Israel was to return with more than what they left with—see Ruth 2:21).¹⁹ Finally, we have the contrast of the two redeemers—Boaz, who was willing and able, and the unnamed relative who was neither.

Finally, their geographical movements correspond to time, which corresponds to circumstance. Ruth and Naomi leave Moab, having buried their husbands and having no real hope in the future. In Israel, they clearly appeared to be within the will of God, and the meeting of Ruth and Boaz offered great hope to Naomi and Ruth.

The Language: Although this book was written in Hebrew, when the characters speak, often their language is more difficult to translate than is the narrative. According to Barnes, this book has a number of *words of Chaldee form and origin, and other expressions peculiar to the later Hebrew*.²⁰ ZPEB: *The style is classical, of no special period; spellings characteristic of early poetry are more readily explained as survivals from oral tradition than as deliberate archaisms. Aramaic touches, which may be present, are not guide to date.*²¹

Although my own linguistic skills are limited, my thinking is that in the language of the characters of the book probably reflects their ten year stay in Moab. You see, one of the things rarely mentioned is that, whereas the narrative portions of this book are fairly easy to follow, what these people say is often quite difficult to understand (we don't get this in the English, as many portions of this book are just flat out incorrectly translated). We should actually expect this. The daughters-in-law, although they have learned to speak Hebrew, were raised as Moabites. Therefore, what they say should contain an occasional Moabism. The mother, Naomi, was raised an Israelite, but has lived in Moab for over a decade, along with having two Moabite daughters-in-law with whom she has become close, so her speech should contain some Moabite language or words which appear only in this book. In fact, we find this quite often. When the women speak, we often have to drag out our Hebrew grammar and lexicons, and then make reasonable deductions, as what they say doesn't always match simple Hebrew. As you read through any English translation, you would never notice this—however, I can guarantee you that there were heated arguments when two or more people were involved in the translation of the dialogue found in this book.

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Women in the Bible: There are only two books about women in Scripture—the Book of Ruth, wherein a Gentile woman marries a Jew; and the Book of Esther, where a Jewess marries a Gentile. In the New Testament, we have the letter from John to a woman in John II. However, the Bible treats women with much more respect than did the

¹⁸ Slightly revised from *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 361.

¹⁹ Most of these contrasts were taken from *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 361.

²⁰ *Barnes' Notes, Volume 2*, F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 471.

²¹ *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 5, p. 176; they cite G. R. Driver, *Supplement Vet Test 1*; 1951, pp. 26–39.

men or the literature of the ancient world. Both the man and the woman are given domination over the earth (Gen. 1:27–28). However, since the fall, the man was given authority over the woman (Gen. 3:16 Eph. 5:22). Still, there is no difference between men and women before Christ (Gal. 3:28).

Outline: The Book of Ruth is probably one of the easiest books to outline:

- I. Ruth and Naomi in Moab (ten years) (Ruth 1)
 - A. Elimelech takes his wife, Naomi, and two children to Moab because of the famine in Israel. His two sons marry Moabite women. Elimelech and the two sons die. Ruth 1:1–5
 - B. Naomi decides to return to Israel; one daughter-in-law, Orpah, remains in Moab, while Ruth goes with her mother-in-law to Israel. Ruth 1:6–18
 - C. Ruth and Naomi come to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest. Ruth 1:19–22
- II. Ruth in the field of Boaz (several months) (Ruth 2)
 - A. Ruth goes to glean the fields for food. Ruth 2:1–3
 - B. Boaz oversees his workers and asks about Ruth. Ruth 2:4–7
 - C. Boaz sees to the provision and protection of Ruth. Ruth 2:8–17
 - D. Ruth returns to Naomi with what she had gleaned. Naomi knows who Boaz is. Ruth 2:18–23
- III. Ruth appeals to Boaz for redemption; this takes place mostly on the threshing floor of Boaz (one day) (Ruth 3)
 - A. Naomi instructs Ruth as to how to approach Boaz to redeem her and Naomi's land. Ruth 3:1–5
 - B. Ruth goes to Boaz at the threshing floor in the middle of the night, asking him for his further provision and care (essentially proposing marriage). Ruth 3:6–9
 - C. Boaz expresses interest but knows of another redeemer. Ruth 3:10–13
 - D. Ruth returns to Naomi, leaving everything in the hands of Boaz. Ruth 3:14–18
- IV. Boaz fulfills the Law, legally removes the nearer kinsman, and marries Ruth (one year) (Ruth 4:1–17)
 - A. Boaz goes to the gate of the city and flags down the other close relative as well as ten elders to witness the transaction. Ruth 4:1–2
 - B. Boaz presents the situation to the other redeemer, who passes on marrying Ruth. Ruth 4:3–8
 - C. In the presence of the ten witnesses, Boaz claims Ruth and the land of Naomi. The witness raise a toast, as it were, to Boaz. Ruth 4:9–12
 - D. Boaz and Ruth marry and she bears a son, Obed. Obed is the ancestor of David. Ruth 4:13–17
- V. Addendum: the line of Perez (Ruth 4:18–22)

Alternate Outline: Thomas Nelson provides a completely different sort of an outline, or organizational chart, if you will. This chart is found in both *the Open Bible* and in *Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts*.²² I have taken some liberties here and there.

FOCUS	Ruth demonstrates her love		Ruth's love is rewarded	
RUTH	1:1–18	1:19–2:23	3:1–18	4:1–22
ACTION	Ruth's decision to	Ruth's commitment to	Ruth requests Boaz to	Boaz redeems Naomi's
CHARACTER FOCUS	Ruth and Naomi		Ruth and Boaz	
TOPIC	Death of family	Ruth takes care of	Naomi watches over	Birth of family
LOCATION	Moab	Field of Boaz	Threshing floor of Boaz	Bethlehem
TIME PERIODS	10 years+	Two months	One day	One year
TIME	12 years			

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²² Primarily taken from *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 355 and *Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts*; Thomas Nelson Publishers; ©1993; p. 82.