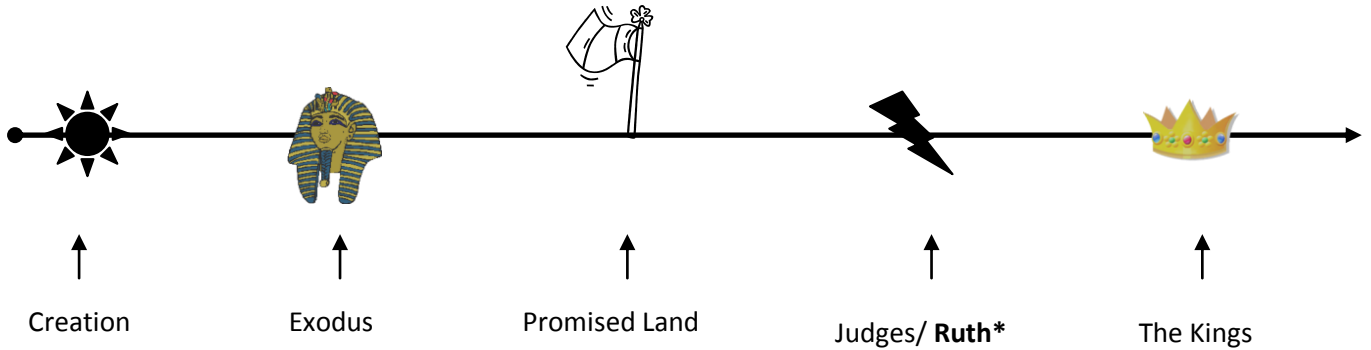


Ruth

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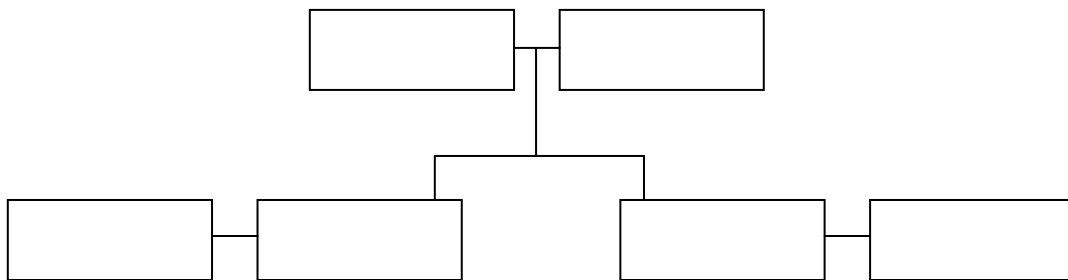
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Ruth in the Timeline of the bible



This book is a love story about a widowed, poor, refugee girl named Ruth who moves from her home country of Moab to live with her mother-in-law Naomi in Bethlehem. It is a story of redemption, where the Boaz meets and cares for the young Ruth who in a risky, counter-cultural plan proposes to Boaz. Boaz takes Ruth to be his wife and she has a child. Yet the real hero of this story is God who orchestrates it all and we see his handy work in the details of this story. Although God comes to the rescue of Ruth and Naomi, the real point of the story is that Ruth and Boaz became the great grandparent to the King David and ultimately the great, great, great, great... great grandparents of Jesus. This is a story of how God is in complete control of all the events of history and is always working out his purposes.

1. Describe a time when you felt empty. How did you react towards God in this time?
2. What is the relationship between the Israelites & Moabites? (Deut 23:3-6, Judges 3:12-30). How is this more like an Iraqi moving to America than a Kiwi moving to Australia? Why did they move?
3. Fill out the family tree using verses 1-5 and cross out the names of the people that died.



4. What were God's instructions about marrying into neighbouring nations? [Deut 7:1-5] What reason is given for this command?
5. What do you usually do when trouble comes your way in life? Endure it and trust and rely on God or run from it and doubt and become bitter toward God? What are some reasons/things that may cause us to run from our problems today?

6. What do we learn about Ruth (her character) through her decision to stay with Naomi? (v. 16)

7. List the difficulties Ruth would have had to leave her culture, home and family to go with Naomi. In a multicultural church how can we make sure people aren't left to be strangers in a new place?

8. Compare Naomi's attitude (v. 13, 20-21) towards God with Ruth's attitude (v. 16-18). How are they different? Is this surprising? [Explain]. How is Ruth an example to be followed here?

9. What worldly things can influence our decision-making, instead of God the ruler of this world? How? Give some examples.

10. Do you think that the terrible suffering of this family was God's judgment on them? Why/ Why not?

11. What perspective does living with Jesus as our Lord bring to our times of emptiness and bitterness? (Romans 8:18-39)

1. Have you or anyone you know, ever been in a situation that seems hopeless but is then is somehow transformed? [Share your story]
2. Who is Boaz and what relation does he have to Naomi? (v. 1-3)
3. What do you learn about Boaz in this chapter? How would you describe his character? (v. 1 and 4)
4. Do you agree that when you commit your life to God, what happens to you happens by God's hand and not by coincidence or accident? (Try and think of examples in your life)
5. Explain how God's sovereign hand and not fluke, was at work in looking after Naomi and Ruth?
6. How did God use Ruth to change Naomi from living in bitterness to having a renewed hope? (v. 18-20)

1. Reflect on what it is like for a person to move to Australia from a different country and culture. If you have someone in your group who has done that maybe they can share their story.

2. What clues do we get that gleaning in the field could be risky for Ruth (v. 9, 22)?

3. How has God used Boaz to bless (v. 12)? How can you be an agent of God's blessing to people like Boaz was?

4. Read the following passages to find out the background to the "kinsman-redeemer" (2:20).
Deuteronomy 25:5-10

Leviticus 25:25-28, 47-53

5. What is gleaning (2:2-3)? Read the following passages to find out the background to "gleaning".
Leviticus 19:9-10, 23:22

Deuteronomy 24:19-22

1. **GIRLS:** Think of your favourite 'love story'. What similarities and differences do you find in the story of Ruth?

GUYS: Think of the last chic flick you were 'forced' to watch. What similarities and differences do you find in the story of Ruth?

2. What effect would the end of barley harvest had on Ruth & Naomi (2:23)? Why does Naomi now plan to find a husband for Ruth? (3:1-2)
3. Recall what you learned from last study about 'kinsman-redeemers'. Is Naomi crazy in what she suggests to Ruth? Why/Why not? How would you describe Naomi actions?
4. Check out Ezekiel 16:8. Compare what God has done for Israel to what Boaz does for Ruth? What is the spreading the corner of the garment over the woman a symbol of?
5. Essentially Ruth proposes marriage to Boaz. What reactions would there have been to this then & today? This wasn't part of Naomi's plan (3:4). Why do you think Ruth did it? Was this risky?

6. What would it have been like for Ruth as she waited (v. 18) to hear the news of whether Boaz would marry her or not?

7. Do you think Boaz acted out of love for Ruth or a sense of duty?

8. **GIRLS:** How can Ruth's "noble character" be an example to follow? Read Proverbs 31 – what characteristics are listed of a "wife of noble character" there? How is Ruth like the woman listed there?

GUYS: How can Boaz the "man of standing" be an example to follow? Read Titus 2:6, Ephesians 5:25-31. What are the characteristics of a real man there?

1. Think of a movie/story that has a kidnapping, ransom or redemption theme running through it. What do you learn about redemption from the movie/story?
2. Who was Boaz's mother? (Matthew 1:5, Joshua 6:25) How might this have influenced Boaz in his decision to marry Ruth?
3. What cost is there to the redeemer to marry Ruth? What would happen to the land if Ruth had a son to Boaz? How might this explain the reluctance of the nearest kinsman to redeem? (4:2-6) What does this tell you about the motivation of both men?
4. How is God's hidden hand seen again in this passage? Could Boaz be sure that the other kinsman would decline his right to redeem?
5. How does this event fulfil the longings of both Naomi (1:9) and Boaz (2:12) for Ruth?
6. What do we know about Rachel & Leah (Genesis 29:31-30:23) and Tamar (Genesis 38)? What do the elders mean when they pronounce this blessing?

1. What?
2. Why do you think the author gives such little time to the wedding in a love story? (v. 13)
3. How has Naomi's situation changed from chapter 1? Who is given credit for this? (4:14)
4. Reflect on how God has redeemed you in Jesus. Do you give him the credit, glory, praise, honour & thanks that are His for what He's done? How can you do this more?
5. What is significant about the family line of Boaz (4:18-22)? What do you notice in Matthew 1:1-18 about the family line? What does this tell you about God's big plan?
6. There are four women mentioned in Matthews's family tree (Matt 1:1-18). What do you notice about each of these women? What does this tell us about the kind of God we worship?



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