

Great Women of the Bible



Gaining Wisdom from Ruth

*Learning from a Great Woman
of the Bible*

Background

The story of Ruth is a tale of friendship, love and sacrifice. Through her story, we have an opportunity to see what true friendship and love for another person looks like.

Ruth's love for her mother-in-law, Naomi, causes her to make a great sacrifice, but at the end of the story, we see Ruth rewarded for her loyalty. The Book of Ruth should cause all of us to examine our friendships from both our perspective and the perspective of the friends we have. What would you do for a friend? What would your friends sacrifice for you? What is the meaning of true friendship? Let's learn from Ruth...

Young Ruth with her Mother-in-Law, Naomi



Ruth 1

- Ruth 1: 1-5
 - Ruth had a husband and two sons. It would appear on the surface that she had a good life. Her husband dies and later, her two sons are killed. *What does this say to us about LIFE?*
 - *Life Lesson: Challenges can come at an instant. Life can be going well and then out of nowhere, trouble arrives on your doorstep.*
- Ruth 1: 6-15
 - After Naomi insists that her daughters-in-law return, Orpah goes back to her people. *How do you personally feel about Orpah's decision to go?*

Orpah leaves, but Ruth clings to Naomi...



What does Ruth's decision to stay with her mother-in-law tell us about her character?

What do you personally think of Ruth's decision to stay with Naomi?

Ruth 2

- Ruth 2: 1-5
 - Boaz is from Elimelech's (and Naomi's) family.
 - Ruth puts herself in a position to meet him.
 - *Ruth seems to be proactive in her situation. Is there anything that we can learn from her approach?*
 - *Life Lesson: Sometimes you have to put forth extra effort if you really desire something for your life.*
 - What do we learn in this passage about Boaz? *Boaz seems to be a good man, an entrepreneur who is well-respected by his workers. He seems humble in his approach with them.*

Ruth 2

- Ruth 2: 11-12
 - Boaz knows Ruth's good deeds (and her reputation). *People know more about us than we think they know...*
 - It is the Lord who repays us for our *good works*. We don't necessarily need other people to repay us and we shouldn't expect praise or repayment from others—ultimately, it comes from God.

Ruth 3

- Ruth 3: 1-8
 - Ruth follows Naomi's advice.
 - Ruth communicates her interest in Boaz.
 - *Is Ruth being proactive and assertive or is she being too aggressive in going after Boaz? What can we learn from Ruth about going after what we desire for our lives?*
- Ruth 3: 9-18
 - Boaz responds favorably.
 - *Being the wealthy man that he was, Boaz probably had many women display interest in him. What do you think made him look seriously at Ruth? Is there anything that single women today can learn from Ruth and Boaz?*

Ruth 4

In the final chapter of the Book of Ruth, we find that Naomi has sold her land and that Boaz is second in line to redeem it because of his position as a family member of Naomi's. Boaz offers it to the family member who is first in line and when that family member is unable to redeem it, Boaz does. Boaz now owns all that was Elimelech's (Naomi's deceased husband), Naomi's and their sons. Boaz then takes Ruth as his wife.

- Ruth 4: 13-18
 - Naomi is blessed with another son. This time it is the son of Boaz and Ruth. It is not Naomi's biological child, but the Lord gives her another child to love and care for—just as a grandmother would care for a grandchild.
 - Because of her loyalty to Naomi, Ruth's life takes a different path and she is blessed a husband, a child, and all she ever dreamed of and more.

Ruth's Legacy

- Thinking of others and their needs above oneself is noble.
- Your elders can be a great source of wisdom and encouragement.
- The reward for your good deeds comes from God.
- Though we go through difficult times in our lives, God is willing and able to make sure that your life story ends well.
- People are watching you and your actions even when you don't realize it.
- Sometimes, you have to be proactive to get what you want.
- Life challenges can come when you least expect them.
- Be good to others and humble and blessings will follow you.