

Themes

Israel and the Nations
Returning and Refuge
Redemption and Rest
Emptiness to Fulness
Loyalty and Royalty
Crop and Crown
Providence
Kindness
YHWH
Christ

the book of *Ruth*



Context: 1v1a "In the days when the judges ruled..."

Post-exodus, pre-kingdom, Israel is now in the Promised Land and ruled by judges but the rulers and the people were spiralling deeper into depravity and have forsaken YHWH.

Two big problems at that time, seen at the end of Judges:

"In those days there was **no king in Israel**. Everyone did **what was right in his own eyes**." -Judges 21:25

Third big problem: 1v1b "...there was a famine in the land."

Not just a natural problem. In their law—Lev 26 & Deut 28—famine was warning sign of Israel's continued disobedience. Forsaking the God who gives them life and land and crops.

The right response: **Return to YHWH**... But this family leave the Promised Land looking for life in Moab, an enemy land. The book of Ruth reveals how God quietly weaves together the lives of a wayward widow returning to God, a foreign widow taking God as her own and a faithful Israelite man, to fulfil his covenant promises for Israel and the nations.

Ch1: Return **Ch2:** Refuge **Ch3:** Rest **Ch4:** Redemption

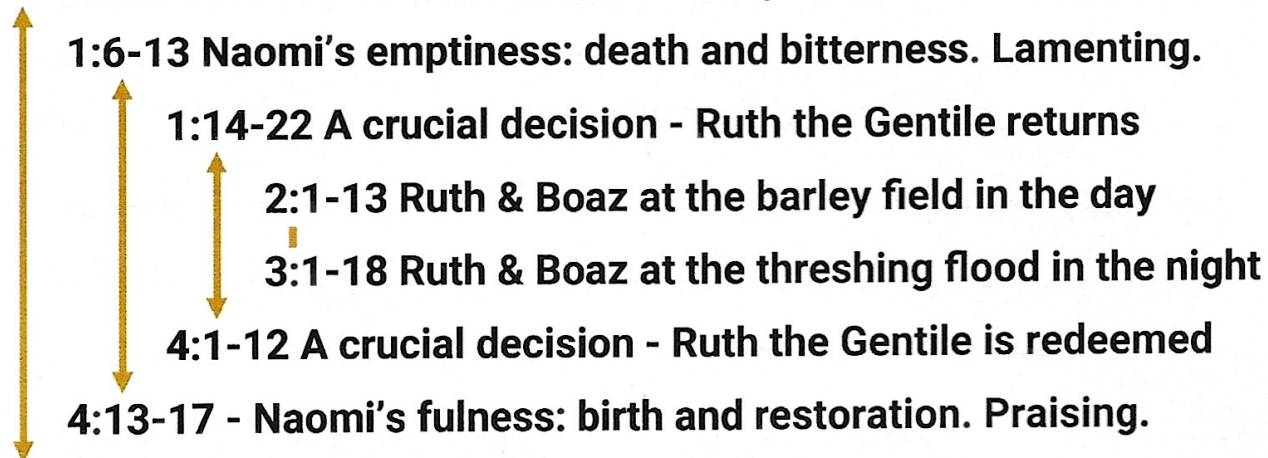
By the end of the book, these three particular problems— *No king in Israel, people doing what is right in their own eyes and famine in the promised land*—are resolved by God in his quiet providence and lovingkindness in unexpected ways. YHWH is faithful.

This pattern has already been revealed from Genesis to Judges: God in his providence and lovingkindness brings deliverance in unexpected ways through unexpected people.

Deliverance, or redemption has been a big theme throughout Judges, along with the need for a king to lead the people in faithfulness to God in the land that God has given them.

There are 4 main acts: Chapters 1 & 4 are parallel, chapters 2 & 3 are parallel, with an overview of the whole book looking like this:

1:1-5 List of names in a time without a king



4:18-22 - List of names that lead to God's King

Big idea: YHWH in his kindness works even in the darkest times to bring about the Redeemer and King who will give rest to all who come to him. His providence reveals his kindness & faithfulness.

Some applications: Like Naomi, return to God (Rom 2:4). Like Ruth, take refuge in him (Ps 2:12). Like Boaz, do what is right (Jn 14:15).

Biggest Idea: It's not merely lessons for obedience, it's a picture of the providence of YHWH revealing his kindness, goodness and sovereignty, **whispering of Jesus the true King, Refuge, Rest and Redeemer.** YHWH in flesh, the embodiment of his 'hesed' (Jn 1:14).

Ref & Resource for outlines: Robin Sydserff, Christopher Ash, Daniel Block