

# Ruth And Naomi

**Introduction.** During the period of the judges, Israel was steeped (degraded, immoral) in sin. Judges records, "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (21:25). The characters in the book of Ruth are not like most of the people we find in the book of Judges. Ruth and Naomi displayed the characteristics of love, industry, generosity, chastity and the desire to worship the God of Israel. Both women were blessed by God.

## I. ***Self Sacrificing Love***

- A. Surely Naomi's life would have been dark and solitary without Ruth, yet her concern for Ruth's happiness caused her to earnestly request that she return to her mother's house (Ruth 1:8-13).
- B. Ruth's concern for Naomi and her desire to worship her God caused her to turn from known comforts to embrace the uncertainty of the unknown (Ruth 1:16-17).
- C. Appropriate principles.
  - 1. God expects us to have concern and love for others (Galatians 6:2, 10).
  - 2. God expects us to care for family members (1 Timothy 5:16).
  - 3. We must forsake worldly comforts, if need be, to provide for the welfare of others.
  - 4. We are expected to serve God before all else.

## II. ***Industry And Generosity***

- A. Ruth requested that she be allowed to go to the field and glean heads of grain (Ruth 2:2).
- B. Ruth shared the grain with Naomi (Ruth 2:18).
- C. Appropriate principles.
  - 1. We are to be industrious and provide for our own needs (2 Thessalonians 3:10).
  - 2. We are to share our blessings with others.

## III. ***Blessings***

- A. Boaz took Ruth as his wife and the Lord gave her a son (Ruth 4:13).
- B. The women of the community, who earlier had witnessed Naomi's bitter lament, gathered around her to share her happiness. They praised the Lord, giving Him credit for providing a redeemer for Naomi.
  - 1. Their statement suggests that the child is the kinsman-redeemer, though this statement should be understood in the context as a blessing pronounced over the child, just as the men had previously prayed for blessing on Boaz (4:11).

2. Boaz is indeed the redeemer (cf. 2:20; 3:9, 12-13; 4:10). The women blessed the child and expressed a hope that he would become famous throughout Israel (Ruth 4:14-15).
- C. The child's name was Obed (Ruth 4:22).
- D. Naomi was at last comforted. From Ruth and her union with Boaz came Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5-6).
- E. Appropriate principles.
  1. Unselfishness is rewarded.
  2. Those pleasing in the sight of God are a source of blessing to others.

**Conclusion.** By any standards the book of Ruth is a classic short story. It has been called the most beautiful short story ever written. Clearly divine providence is behind everything that happens in the book: the famine, the deaths, Ruth's choice of Boaz's field as a place to glean, his attraction to her and their eventual marriage. It gives us faith in God's working with His people.

**Questions:**

1. Ruth and Naomi were women of good character. Explain.
2. Considering Boaz's wealth and Ruth's poverty, circumstances neither make or destroy Christians. Explain.
3. What do you consider to be the theme of the book of Ruth?
4. List New Testament scriptures dealing with the subjects of generosity, industry, love and chastity.
5. What does the name Naomi mean? What does Mara mean?
6. Ruth and Naomi were rewarded by God. Explain.
7. How are the faithful rewarded today?
8. Give New Testament references to Ruth.