

# The Book of Ruth

## Objective:

- 🕒 To learn and feel the importance of loving elders, respecting them and the reward of obedience.
- 🕒 To understand that God accepted the Gentiles even in the Old Testament.

## References:

- 🕒 The Book of Ruth
- 🕒 The explanation of Ruth / Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty.

## Memory verse:

“Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God” (Ruth 1:16).

## Introduction:

Request the students to read the Book at home the week before. Ask them about what can attract people to Christianity more: preaching or love, respect and service?

## Lesson Outline:

- 🕒 The best answer to this question can be found in the Book of Ruth. Note that Ruth is one of only three books in the Bible that is named after a woman (Ruth, Esther and Judith). It is the only Book named after a non-Jewish woman. She must be more than a great man or woman to deserve a place in the Holy Bible and be rewarded by becoming one of the grandmothers of our Lord Jesus.
- 🕒 The story started with a famine in the Promised Land of Judah. The family went to Moab for food. Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died. She dwelt there ten years until both her sons also died (lost all her support). Then she arose to return to Judah (to see whatever was left of her land). Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "...Go, return each to her mother's house. The Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband" (Ruth 1:8) (she blessed them with the name of the Lord). "It grieves me very much for your sakes (self-denial). Orpah left but Ruth said: "...Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God" (Ruth 1:16) and she went with her.

## I. What Made Ruth Cling To Her Mother-In-Law

### A. Unlimited love

Pure and sincere without hypocrisy. Ruth would not have followed her if there were no love. Love is a strong magnet. Ruth must have felt it during the short time she was married to Naomi's son.

### B. Strong relationship with her creator

Naomi felt His presence all the time in her life and she passed this feeling on to her daughters-in-law. One of them (Ruth), with her free will accepted Him. She did not see Him as a carved image, but she saw His image carved in her mother-in-law and believed.

## II. The Story

⌚ They arrived at Bethlehem, and the entire city was excited because of their return. The women said, “Is this Naomi?” (Ruth 1:19) She answered sadly “I went out full, and the Lord has brought me empty...” (Ruth 1:21) Ruth went and gleaned in the field after the reapers in the field of Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech. Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, “The Lord be with you!” (Ruth 2:4). And they answered him, “The Lord bless you!” (Notice the greeting from Boaz to the reapers and their answer back, all blessings from the Lord.).

⌚ Boaz said “Whose young woman is this?” (Ruth 2:5). The servant answered “It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab” (Ruth 2:6) Boaz called Ruth and said, “You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, but stay close by my young women...and when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn” (Ruth 2:8-9). (He immediately gave her all the rights of the young women in his team and not as a foreigner; he allowed her to eat from their food and drink from their jars).

⌚ She realized it and fell on her face as a slave and asked him, “Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?” (Ruth 2:11). Boaz answered, “It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband...The Lord repay your work” (Ruth 2:11-12). (He did not take credit but affirmed to her that she came to the protection of the Lord Who was repaying her for her respect, obedience, love and service to her mother-in-law).

⌚ Naomi gave her strange instructions based on the traditions: “Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor...uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do” (Ruth 3:3-4). So, she obeyed and went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her.

⌚ Boaz recognized the tradition and said, “Blessed are you of the Lord...I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman” (Ruth 3:10-11). (He blessed her by the name of the Lord, praised her actions and her virtues). *Note to the servant: Be prepared to answer a sudden comment from a child at this age by saying politely: “She was not a cheap girl throwing herself on him for sex, she was a virtuous woman asking for her right to have offspring in the same words she was taught by her mother-in-law, who knew the law of the Lord.”*

⌚ Boaz did not rush to do her request. It was the honorable duty of another family member but he gave her a promise and sealed it with the name of God: “if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you--good; let him do it. But if he does not, I will, as the Lord lives!” (Ruth 3:13). He ordered her to wait and she obeyed and slept at his feet until morning. Boaz did not send her away empty-handed, he measured six ephahs (1 ephah = 3/5 bushels = 22 liters) of barley, and laid it on her and sent her to Naomi.

⌚ Boaz searched and found the close relative, took ten men of the elders of the city as judges, and said to the relative, “Naomi...sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech...If you will redeem it, redeem it (buy it back); but if you will not redeem it...I will” (Ruth 4:3-4) and “On the day you buy the

field...you must also buy it from Ruth, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate (preserve) the name of the dead through his inheritance” (Ruth 4:5). The close relative said, “I cannot redeem it...you redeem my right of redemption for yourself (you do it)” (Ruth 4:6).

⌚ So Boaz took Ruth for a wife; and the Lord granted that she conceives. The women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a close relative (Redeemer)...for your daughter-in-law, who loves you...is better to you than seven sons” (Ruth 4:14-15).

### **Conclusion/Questions:**

- ⌚ How many sons did Naomi have?
- ⌚ What was the name of their father? To which tribe of the twelve did they belong?
- ⌚ What is the name of Naomi’s daughters-in-law? Were they from the same tribe or foreigners?
- ⌚ What do you think made them love Naomi? Who returned with her and who stayed?
- ⌚ What did Ruth do to supply food to her mother-in-law after their return?
- ⌚ What do you think of Boaz’s personality? The people who work for him? Why did he treat Ruth this way?
- ⌚ What did Naomi instruct Ruth to do and why? How did Boaz react?
- ⌚ Whose grandmother did Ruth become?

### **Applications:**

- ⌚ Love, respect and obedience especially to our elders have a reward from God.
- ⌚ Search for the differences and similarities between Esther and Ruth.