

RUTH



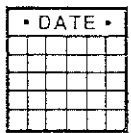
Ruth is a story of love, devotion, and redemption set in the distressing context of the period of the judges. It presents a Moabite woman who forsakes her pagan heritage in order to cling to the people of Israel and to the God of Israel. Because of her faithfulness in a time of national faithlessness, God rewards her by giving her a new husband, a son, and a privileged position in the ancestral line of David and Christ.

Author



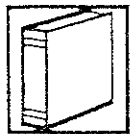
The author of Ruth is not identified by the text. Jewish tradition attributes the work to Samuel, but this is unlikely since David appears in Ruth 4:17, 22, and Samuel died prior to David's coronation as king. The composition of the book probably dates to the early kingdom period. That David's son Solomon is not mentioned in the genealogy may indicate that Ruth was written during David's reign as king. The anonymity of the work should not, however, detract from its profound spiritual value and literary beauty.

Date



Though the date of composition is uncertain, the story of Ruth itself takes place in the latter part of the period of the judges (c. 1100 B.C.) and covers a time span of about twelve years. This period of Israel's history was generally a desert of rebellion and immorality, but the story of Ruth stands in contrast as an oasis of integrity and righteousness.

Themes and Literary Structure



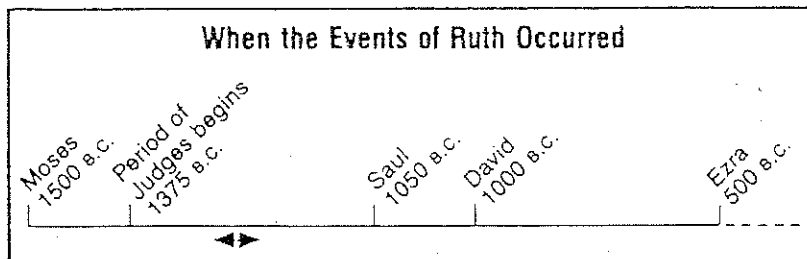
The brief yet beautiful story of Ruth is crafted with care by its unknown author. As the chart "Ruth at a Glance" demonstrates, the narrative is symmetrical with a structure of parallel elements that meet in the middle of the book (the end of ch. 2).

This literary structure serves to highlight several important themes. Most prominent is the theme of redemption. The Hebrew word for kinsman (*goel*)

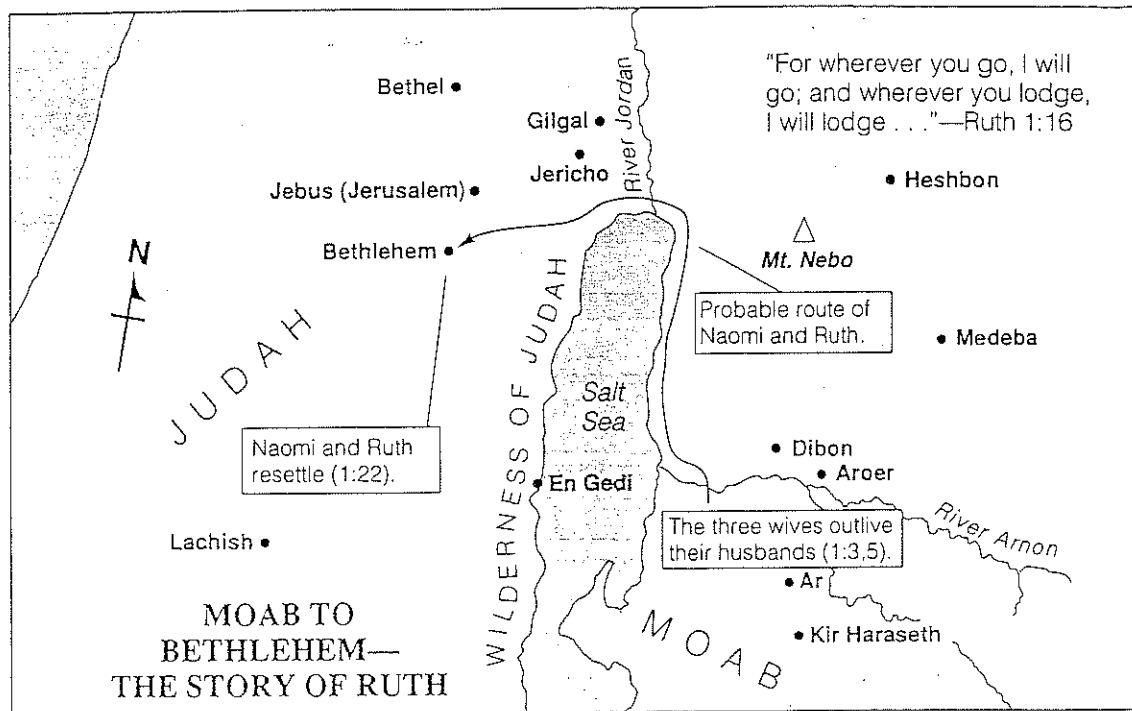
Ruth at a Glance

FOCUS	RUTH'S LOVE DEMONSTRATED		RUTH'S LOVE REWARDED	
REFERENCE	1:1 ————— 1:19 ————— 3:1 ————— 4:1 ————— 4:22			
DIVISION	RUTH'S DECISION TO STAY WITH NAOMI	RUTH'S DEVOTION TO CARE FOR NAOMI	RUTH'S REQUEST FOR REDEMPTION BY BOAZ	RUTH'S REWARD OF REDEMPTION BY BOAZ
TOPIC	RUTH AND NAOMI		RUTH AND BOAZ	
	DEATH OF FAMILY	RUTH CARES FOR NAOMI	BOAZ CARES FOR RUTH	BIRTH OF FAMILY
LOCATION	MOAB	FIELDS OF BETHLEHEM	THRASHING FLOOR OF BETHLEHEM	BETHLEHEM
TIME	c. 12 YEARS			

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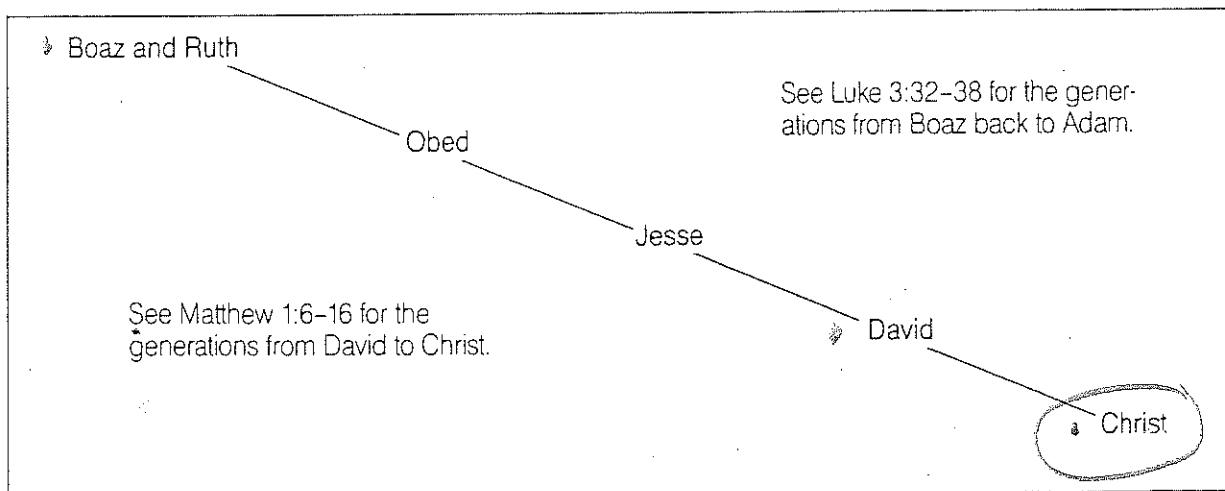
The Story of Ruth



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A Distinguished Descendant

The book of Ruth concludes with a ten-name genealogy (4:18–22), which presents the royal ancestry of David. Thus, the book ends with a reminder of redemption by focusing on this vital link in which Jew and Gentile unite to share in the ancestry of King David, through whom came Jesus the Christ (1 Chron. 2:5–15; Matt. 1:1; Luke 3:31–33). Indeed, the setting of the book of Ruth in Bethlehem of Judah brings to mind the birth of Ruth's descendant, Jesus Christ, in that same city of Bethlehem (Luke 2:7).



Kinsman-Redeemer

O.T. Qualification	Christ's Fulfillment
1. Blood Relationship	Gal. 4:4, 5; Heb. 2:16, 17
2. Necessary Resources	1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19
3. Willingness to Buy	John 10:15-18; 1 John 3:16

The Family Tree of Ruth

