

# Judges & Ruth

God's *Faithfulness* Remains

women's | BIBLE STUDY

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women's | BIBLE STUDY

LESSON *Sixteen*

Ruth and Boaz

Following the devastating beginning of the story, Boaz arrived on the scene. Ruth went to work in his field for food, and she was met with incredible kindness. Unprompted, Boaz offered Ruth food, protection, and encouragement because of her love for Naomi. While hope seemed lost in the beginning, God was at work. His faithfulness remained.

## BOAZ

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Boaz' name means "mighty man of strength."<sup>86</sup>

## WORTHY

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Boaz was a "worthy man." In this context "it connotes not only wealth and status but also ability, honor, and capability."<sup>87</sup>

## NAOMI'S FAMILY

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Boaz was part of Naomi's extended family.<sup>88</sup>

## GOD'S PROVISION

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Gleaning was a source of provision from God for those who did not have food. Anyone lacking could gather grain from the edge of the fields or pick up what was dropped after the harvest. For a better understanding, see Deuteronomy 24:19-22 and read the article called "What is the meaning of gleaning?" on [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org).

**Read Ruth 2 before answering the following questions.**

1. Look back at Ruth 1. Where did you see the following themes?

*Emptiness*

*Provision*

*Sacrifice*

2. Boaz is introduced in Ruth 2:1. Write down what you discover about him from this chapter. (Ex: family history, job, etc.)

**Read Ruth 2:1-3.**

3. Verses 1-3 set the scene for this chapter. From these verses, what do you learn about the:

*Main Characters:*

*Situation:*

4. How do you see Ruth take initiative? What does this demonstrate about her character? (Remember the circumstances she is coming from in chapter 1.)

- The author emphasized that Ruth was not from Israel in this chapter. She was an outsider, vulnerable because she was not like everyone else. When have you felt like an outsider? When have you helped an outsider feel welcomed or loved? How can you grow in compassion for those who are different from you?

**Read Ruth 2:4-17.**

- Ruth was destitute, without provision or protection by all worldly standards. She needed help, and, due to God’s abundant kindness, she found Boaz. In the chart below, from verses 4-17, list all Boaz’ acts of kindness toward Ruth.

VERSE	ACT OF KINDNESS

Considering how the book of Judges ended, how were Boaz’ actions a stark contrast to the actions of other men of the day?

- We live in a world where genuine kindness, especially the type that goes above and beyond, is rare. Whose kindness has deeply influenced you? Honestly consider, are the people around you being changed because of your kindness?

## RECONCILIATION

For an understanding of what the Bible says about reconciliation see Galatians 3:29, Ephesians 2:14, James 2:1, 1 John 3:15, and Revelation 7:9.

### VERSE 3

Verse 3 states that Ruth “happened to come...” indicating it was an act of luck. “Rather than promoting a theology of chance, the narrator was highlighting God’s sovereign control of human affairs. From Ruth’s perspective she randomly picked a field, but God was steering her to the right one.”<sup>89</sup>

### BOAZ’ INSTRUCTION

Boaz instructed the men not to “touch” Ruth, indicating that the workers “roughed up” anyone who was working in the fields without permission.<sup>90</sup>

### FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Kindness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comes to dwell inside believers the moment they accept Jesus as their Savior. As a believer submits to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, kindness, and other characteristics that resemble God, will be increasingly evident in their lives. (Galatians 5:13-25).

### GOD’S KINDNESS

Boaz’ kindness to Ruth foreshadows the abundant kindness a believer receives from our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. For Scripture on the kindness of God, read Psalm 117:1-2, Isaiah 54:10, Romans 2:4 and 11:22, Ephesians 2:4-7.

## EPHAH OF BARLEY

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Ruth collected an ephah of barley, a large amount which would have been enough food for about a week. Due to the amount of grain Ruth collected, Naomi knew that someone showed her immense kindness (verse 19).

## KINSMAN REDEEMER

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A kinsman redeemer is a male relative who, according to various laws found in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), had the privilege or responsibility to act for a relative who was in trouble, danger, or need of vindication.

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For more information on kinsman redeemers, read the article on **gotquestions.org** called “What is a kinsman redeemer?”

## RUTH’S FAITH

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God cautioned His people away from relationships with foreigners in Judges, because they would sway the hearts of the Israelites to other gods. Yet, Ruth was a foreigner experiencing the kindness and provision of God. Why? Ruth believed in the God of Israel (Ruth 1:16-17).

## OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

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Turn to page 150 for an optional activity on fruit of the Spirit.

“We ought not to be weary of doing little things for the love of God, who regards not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is performed.”

— *Brother Lawrence*<sup>91</sup>

8. Summarize the main idea of verses 4-17.

### Read Ruth 2:18-23.

9. Where do you see Naomi’s demeanor shifting from chapter 1? Why did this shift come about?
10. What does Naomi call Boaz? Considering the definition in the side bar, what hope did this give to these two widows?
11. Considering all of Ruth 2, were the circumstances chance encounters or God’s hand at work? How do you think Ruth felt? (See Appendix: Provision.)
12. Where in your own life have you seen God at work in a way that others might call it circumstantial or merely coincidental? How is God using ordinary situations to teach you about His extraordinary faithfulness?



BIG IDEA

What is your biggest takeaway from this week's lesson?

## OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: Fruit of the Spirit

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The last lesson focused on the theme of kindness, an act and attitude that starts with God and is exhibited through His followers. In this case, kindness is seen in Ruth and Boaz. We learn in Galatians 5:16-25 that kindness is a work of the Holy Spirit:

*“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:16-25)*

Those who believe in Jesus should live lives guided by the Holy Spirit. He is the one who transforms you to look more like Jesus. He is the one who convicts you of sin. He is the one who brings about fruit in your life, such as love and kindness. So, what does it mean to walk by the Spirit? Is it mustering up the strength to do better? No. It is quite the opposite in fact. Ultimately, believers live by the Spirit when they realize they can do nothing apart from Christ. It is only by surrendering to the work of the Spirit that you can exhibit love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Keep this in mind as you walk through the following.

Where in your life are you struggling to love someone as Jesus would? Spend some time thinking about that relationship.

Now, read John 15:5-14. Meditate on verse 5 when Jesus says to His disciples, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

Tell God: “I cannot love this person well without your help. Without you I will fail every single time.” Explain to God why it is hard to love them. Unpack the difficult things in your relationship. Then ask: What does it look like to love this person well? What does it look like to walk by the Spirit in this relationship?

Listen and write down anything God reveals to you in the space below.

“The Christian life is what you do when you finally realize you can do nothing.” — Dallas Willard

Notes