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Book of ruth summary

East Asian All East Asian Abrahamic/Middle East Indian All Indian Other Beliefs & Religions All Other Beliefs & Religions The Book of Ruth is a fascinating short story from the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) about a non-Jewish woman who married into a Jewish family and became an ancestor of David and Jesus. The Book of Ruth is one of the Bible's shortest books, telling its story in just four chapters. Its main character is a Moabite woman named Ruth, the daughter-in-law of a Jewish widow named Naomi. It's an intimate family tale of misfortune, crafty use of kinship ties, and ultimately, loyalty. The story is told in an odd place, interrupting the grand sweep of history found in the books around it. These "history" books are called the Deuteronomistic History because they all share theological principles expressed in the Book of Deuteronomy. Specifically, they are based on the idea that God had directed, intimate relationships with the descendants of Abraham, the Jews, and was involved directly in shaping Israel's history. How does the vignette of Ruth and Naomi fit in? In the original version of the Hebrew Bible, the Torah, Ruth's story is part of the writings ("Ketuvim in Hebrew), along with Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah. Contemporary biblical scholars now tend to categorize the books as "theological and didactic historiography." In other words, these books reconstruct historical events to some degree, but they tell the histories by means of imaginative literary devices for purposes of religious instruction and inspiration. During a famine, a man named Elimelech took his wife Naomi and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, east from their home in Bethlehem in Judea to a country called Moab. After their father's death, the sons married Moabite women, Orpah, and Ruth. They lived together for about 10 years until both Mahlon and Chilion died, leaving their mother Naomi to live with her daughters-in-law. Hearing that the famine had ended in Judah, Naomi decided to return to her home, and she urged her daughters-in-law to return to their own mothers in Moab. After much dispute, Orpah acceded to her mother-in-law's wishes and left her weeping. But the Bible says Ruth clung to Naomi and uttered her now-famous words, "Where you go I will go; where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God" (Ruth 1:16). Once they reached Bethlehem, Naomi and Ruth sought food by gleaning grain from the field of a kinsman, Boaz. Boaz offered Ruth protection and food. When Ruth asked why she, a foreigner, should receive such kindness, Boaz replied that he had learned of Ruth's faithfulness to her mother-in-law, and he prayed that the God of Israel would bless Ruth for her loyalty. Naomi then contrived to marry Ruth to Boaz by invoking her kinship with him. She sent Ruth to Boaz at night to offer herself to him, but the upright Boaz refused to take advantage of her. Instead, he helped Naomi and Ruth negotiate some terms of inheritance, after which he married Ruth. Soon they had a son, Obed, who fathered a son, Jesse, who was the father of David, who became king of a unified Israel. The Book of Ruth is the kind of high drama that would have played well in Jewish oral tradition. A faithful family is driven by famine from Judah to the non-Jewish land of Moab. Their sons' names are metaphors for their misery ("Mahlon" means "sickness" and "Chilion" means "wasting" in Hebrew). The loyalty that Ruth shows Naomi is richly rewarded, as is her love for the true one God of her mother-in-law. Bloodlines are second to faith (a hallmark of the Torah, where second sons repeatedly win the birthrights that should pass to their elder brothers). When Ruth becomes the great-grandmother of Israel's heroic king, David, it means that not only could a foreigner be completely assimilated, but he or she might be God's instrument for some higher good. The placement of Ruth alongside Ezra and Nehemiah is interesting. In at least one aspect, Ruth acts as a rebuke to the others. Ezra and Nehemiah demanded that Jews divorce foreign wives; Ruth shows that outsiders who profess faith in Israel's God could be fully assimilated into Jewish society. For Christians, the Book of Ruth is an early echo of the divinity of Jesus. Connecting Jesus to the House of David (and ultimately to Ruth) gave the Nazarene the imprimatur of a messiah among early converts to Christianity. David was Israel's greatest hero, a messiah (God-sent leader) in his own right. Jesus' lineage from David's family in both blood through his mother Mary and legal kinship through his foster father Joseph lend credence to his followers' claims that he was the Messiah who would liberate the Jews. Thus for Christians, the Book of Ruth represents an early sign that the Messiah would liberate all of humankind, not solely the Jews. Quick Summary: The Book of Ruth tells a beautiful story of loyalty and redemption as Ruth, a Moabite widow, chooses to stay with her mother-in-law Naomi and eventually finds love and purpose in her new life in Bethlehem. The Book of Ruth, Book Summary The Book of Ruth is a short but profound narrative set during the time of the judges in Israel. It introduces us to the lives of Naomi and her Moabite daughter-in-law, Ruth, highlighting themes of love, loyalty, and divine providence. The story begins in a period of famine that drives Naomi and her family from Bethlehem to Moab in search of better conditions. Sadly, Naomi's husband dies, followed by the death of her two sons, which leaves her alone and grief-stricken. In Moab, Naomi's sons marry two Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah. After Naomi learns that the famine in Bethlehem has ended, she decides to return. She urges her daughters-in-law to stay in Moab and find new husbands. Orpah agrees and stays behind, but Ruth insists on accompanying Naomi, demonstrating remarkable loyalty. Ruth famously declares, "Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay." This presents the foundation of their relationship based on profound love and commitment. As Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem, they face challenges. Ruth, being a Moabite, is seen as an outsider. To support Naomi, Ruth gleans in the fields during the harvest season, a practice allowed for the poor and widowed. She ends up working in the fields owned by Boaz, a relative of Naomi's late husband. Boaz notices Ruth's dedication and kindness, and he ensures that she is protected and provided for while she works in his fields. As the story unfolds, Naomi encourages Ruth to seek a marriage proposal from Boaz, establishing a beautiful act of chesed, or loving-kindness. Ruth approaches Boaz during the harvest celebration, uncovering his feet in the night, a symbolic act that signifies her desire for him to take her under his protection as a family redeemer. Boaz is taken aback by Ruth's boldness and loyalty both to Naomi and to her late husband, and he agrees to marry her, but he informs her that there is a closer relative who has the first right to redeem. Ultimately, Boaz confronts the closer relative in the city gate and presents the opportunity for him to redeem Naomi's land and marry Ruth. The relative declines, opening the way for Boaz. Boaz marries Ruth, and their union is blessed by the community. They have a son named Obed, who becomes the grandfather of King David. The Book of Ruth not only illustrates the importance of loyalty and love but also offers a powerful portrait of God's providence as He weaves together different lives for a great purpose. This story highlights how love can cross cultural boundaries, emphasizing the idea that God's grace is available to all, regardless of their background. Lessons From The Book of Ruth, Lesson 1: The Power of Loyalty The story of Ruth and Naomi is a profound testament to stay with Naomi despite losing her husband and being in a foreign land demonstrates profound commitment. When faced with hardship, she chooses to support her mother-in-law rather than return to her own family. This teaches us that loyalty can strengthen relationships, even in the most challenging times. Here are some reflections on loyalty: Loyalty nurtures trust. When Ruth commits to Naomi, it fosters a relationship built on trust and understanding. Loyalty transcends boundaries. Ruth, a Moabite, shows that true loyalty knows no cultural borders. In times of crisis, loyalty can provide stability. Ruth's presence offers her mother-in-law comfort and companionship. This lesson inspires us to stand together in our own relationships. How can we show loyalty to our family, friends, or even our community during difficult times? Unconditional loyalty is not just a bond shared but a commitment to stand together irrespective of circumstances. Lesson 2: The Importance of Kindness Ruth's story emphasizes kindness and compassion as traits central to human relationships. Throughout the narrative, Ruth's actions showcase her kindness in several ways. She willingly gleaned in the fields to provide for Naomi, risking her own safety and well-being to support her family. Her encounters with Boaz also demonstrate how acts of kindness can lead to unexpected blessings. The takeaways from this aspect are: Acts of kindness can change lives. 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also, if ought but death part thee and me. 18. When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. 19. So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it ...Alexander Maclaren—Expositions of Holy ScriptureThe Worst Things Work for Good to the GodlyDO not mistake me, I do not say that of their own nature the worst things are good, for they are a fruit of the curse; but though they are naturally evil, yet the wise overruling hand of God disposing and sanctifying them, they are morally good. As the elements, though of contrary qualities, yet God has so tempered them, that they all work in a harmonious manner for the good of the universe. Or as in a watch, the wheels seem to move contrary one to another, but all carry on the motions of the watch: ...Thomas Watson—A Divine CordialBands of LoveP. G. Ruth i. 16, 17 A homeless Stranger amongst us came To this land of death and mourning; He walked in a path of sorrow and shame, Through insult, and hate, and scorning. A Man of sorrows, of toil and tears, An outcast Man and a lonely; But he looked on me, and through endless years Him must I love—Him only. Then from this sad and sorrowful land, From this land of tears He departed; But the light of His eyes and the touch of His hand had left me broken-hearted. And I clave to Him as He turned ...Frances Bevan—Hymns of Ter Steegeen, Suso, and OthersWhat is Thy Beloved, More than Another Beloved, that Thou Dost So Charge Us? The daughters of Jerusalem do not cease to call her the fairest among women, because her most painful wounds are hidden, and those which are exposed even add lustre to her beauty. They are astonished at beholding a love so strong, so constant and so faithful in the midst of so many disasters. They inquire, Who is this Well-beloved? For, say they, He must be of unequalled attraction, thus to engage His spouse; for though these souls are spiritual, they are not yet sufficiently advanced to comprehend ...Madame Guyon—Song of Songs of SolomonWhether the Old Law Set forth Suitable Precepts About the Members of the Household? Objection 1: It would seem that the Old Law set forth unsuitable precepts about the members of the household. For a slave "is in every respect his master's property," as the Philosopher states (Polit. i. 2). But that which is a man's property should be his always. Therefore it was unfiting for the Law to command (Ex. 21:2) that slaves should "go out free" in the seventh year. Objection 2: Further, a slave is his master's property, just as an animal, e.g. an ass or an ox. But it is commanded (Dt. ...Saint Thomas Aquinas—Summa TheologicaEpsitole xxxii. To Narses the Patrician. Gregory to Narses, &c. 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replied: Ruth's response is a pivotal moment in the narrative, showcasing her loyalty and commitment. This reply is significant as it marks a turning point in her life and in the story of Naomi's family. Ruth, a Moabite, is making a conscious decision to align herself with Naomi, an Israelite, which is a profound act of devotion and love. Do not urge me to leave you or to turn from following you. Ruth's insistence on staying with Naomi highlights the depth of her loyalty. In the ancient Near Eastern culture, family ties were paramount, and Ruth's determination to remain with Naomi, despite the cultural and ethnic differences, underscores her steadfastness. This mirrors the biblical theme of covenant loyalty, akin to God's unwavering faithfulness to His people. For wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you live, I will live; Ruth's commitment to Naomi is total and unconditional. This phrase reflects the biblical principle of leaving one's past behind to embrace a new future, similar to Abraham's call to leave his homeland (Genesis 12:1). Ruth's willingness to adopt a new land and lifestyle is a testament to her faith and courage. Your people will be my people, Ruth's declaration to adopt Naomi's people signifies her acceptance of a new identity. This is a profound step, as it involves leaving behind her Moabite heritage. It echoes the biblical theme of inclusion and foreshadows the New Testament message of the Gentiles being grafted into the people of God (Romans 11:17-24). And your God will be my God. This is the climax of Ruth's declaration, indicating her conversion and acceptance of the God of Israel. In a polytheistic society, choosing to follow the God of Israel was a significant spiritual decision. Ruth's faith is a precursor to the inclusion of the Gentiles in the covenant community, and her story is a type of Christ's redemptive work, where all nations are invited to become part of God's family. Ruth 1:17: Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. This mirrors the covenantal loyalty seen in other biblical figures, such as Jonathan's commitment to David (1 Samuel 18:3). It also foreshadows the New Testament call to discipleship, where followers of Christ are called to leave behind their former lives (Luke 9:23). May the LORD punish me, and even so severely, Ruth invokes the name of the LORD, using a solemn oath formula common in ancient Israel. This reflects her acceptance of the God of Israel, aligning herself with Naomi's faith. The invocation of divine punishment for breaking the vow highlights the seriousness of her commitment. This type of oath is seen elsewhere in Scripture, such as in 1 Samuel 3:17, where Eli demands the truth from Samuel. It emphasizes the gravity and sincerity of the promise being made, if anything but death separates you and me. Ruth's declaration is reminiscent of the marriage covenant, where only death is to be the couple (Romans 7:2). This reflects the depth of her loyalty and love, akin to the steadfast love (hesed) that God shows to His people. The phrase also prefigures the New Testament teaching on the permanence of God's love, as seen in Romans 8:38-39, where nothing can separate believers from the love of God in Christ. Jesus' commitment is a type of Christ's unwavering dedication to His Church, illustrating the sacrificial and enduring nature of divine love. Ruth 1:18: When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, Naomi, a widow from Bethlehem, had been living in Moab due to a famine in Judah. Her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, were Moabite women. The cultural context here is significant; Moabites and Israelites had a history of tension, and Ruth's determination to leave her homeland and follow Naomi is a profound act of loyalty and faith. This determination can be seen as a reflection of God's covenantal faithfulness, as Ruth's commitment mirrors the steadfast love God shows to His people. Ruth's decision also reflects her role in the lineage of David and ultimately Jesus Christ, highlighting the inclusion of Gentiles in God's redemptive plan. She stopped trying to persuade her mother-in-law to return to Moab, as a practical concern for Ruth's future safety and protection for her husband. In the ancient Near Eastern culture, a woman's social status often depended on her family connections, and Ruth had no more to offer than her Moabite heritage. Naomi's response indicates Ruth's unwavering commitment. This moment underscores the theme of divine providence, as Ruth's choice to stay with Naomi leads to her becoming an ancestor of King David and, by extension, Jesus Christ. Naomi's acceptance of Ruth's decision also marks a turning point in the narrative, setting the stage for the unfolding of God's plan through Ruth's example. The Return to Bethlehem Ruth 1:19-21: Naomi and Ruth traveled back to their home in Bethlehem. Naomi, on her journey, symbolized the return to God's provision and covenant land, contrasting Moab, often associated with idolatry and judgment. Ruth's commitment to Naomi and her God reflects a profound conversion and loyalty, prefiguring Gentile inclusion in God's redemptive plan. When they entered Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. The arrival of Naomi and Ruth causes a commotion, indicating Naomi's previous status and the town's small, close-knit nature. The Hebrew word "stirred" suggests a significant emotional reaction, possibly due to Naomi's changed appearance and circumstances. This scene sets the stage for the unfolding of God's providence and foreshadows the impact Ruth will have on the community and Israel's identity. The town's reaction also highlights the cultural importance of community and kinship in ancient Israel, and the women of the town exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?" The women's question reflects surprise and perhaps pity, as Naomi's return contrasts with her previous departure with a full family. Her name, meaning "pleasant," now seems ironic given her hardships. This moment underscores themes of identity and transformation, as Naomi's experiences have reshaped her life. The women's role in the narrative emphasizes the communal aspect of Israelite society and sets up Naomi's lament in the following verses, where she expresses her bitterness and sense of loss. This examination also foreshadows the restoration and redemption that will come through Ruth's actions and God's intervention. Ruth 1:20: "Do not call me Naomi," she replied. Naomi's name means "pleasant" or "delightful," reflecting a positive and joyful character. Her request to change her name signifies a profound transformation in her identity due to her circumstances. In biblical times, names held significant meaning and were often reflective of one's life experiences or divine purpose. Naomi's insistence on a name change indicates her life no longer aligns with the meaning of "Naomi." "Call me Mara." The name "Mara" means "bitter." By choosing this name, Naomi expresses the depth of her grief and the bitterness she feels after losing her husband and sons. This symbol is characteristic of her perception of her life as being filled with hardship and suffering. The use of "Mara" connects to the Israelites' experience in Exodus 15:23, where they encountered bitter waters at Marah, highlighting themes of trial and divine testing because the Almighty. The term "Almighty" is translated from the Hebrew "Shaddai," a name for God that emphasizes His power and sovereignty. Naomi acknowledges God's control over her life circumstances, recognizing His authority even in her suffering. This reflects a common biblical theme where individuals attribute their life events, both good and bad, to God's will, as seen in the stories of Job and Joseph. Her statement echoes the lament tradition found in the Psalms, where individuals openly express their grievances to God. Despite her bitterness, Naomi's acknowledgment of God's role in her life suggests an underlying faith, as she continues to engage with Him even in her distress. Ruth 1:21: went away full Naomi reflects on her departure from Bethlehem to Moab during a time of famine. "Full" signifies not only material wealth but also the presence of her family—her husband and two sons. This phrase highlights the initial hope and prosperity she felt, contrasting with her current state. The move to Moab, a land often at odds with Israel, was a significant decision, showing the desperation of the times (Ruth 1:1). The fullness she refers to is both physical and relational, emphasizing the loss she has experienced, but the LORD has brought me back empty Naomi attributes her return to the sovereignty of God, acknowledging His control over her circumstances. "Empty" signifies the loss of her husband and sons, as well as her perceived loss of purpose and identity. This reflects the cultural importance of family and lineage in ancient Israel. The emptiness also symbolizes spiritual and emotional desolation, a theme echoed in Job's lament (Job 1:21). 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After all, the LORD has responded to me Naomi perceives her suffering as a divine testimony against her, suggesting a belief in retributive justice common in the Old Testament. This reflects the cultural understanding of God's direct involvement in the fortunes and misfortunes of individuals. The idea of God testing against someone is seen in the laments of Job (Job 16:8) and the psalms of David (Psalm 51:4), where personal suffering is interpreted as divine judgment and the Almighty has afflicted me. The use of "Almighty" (Shaddai) emphasizes God's power and authority. Naomi's statement reflects a deep sense of personal affliction and divine chastisement. This aligns with the biblical theme of God as both a source of comfort and a figure of awe-inspiring power, as seen in the narratives of the patriarchs and the prophets. 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3:11 And now do not be afraid, my daughter. This phrase reflects Boaz's reassurance to Ruth, emphasizing his protective and caring nature. The term "my daughter" indicates a familial and respectful relationship, highlighting the cultural norms of addressing younger women with care and respect. It also reflects Boaz's role as a kinsman-redeemer, a concept rooted in Levitical law (Leviticus 25:25), where a close relative is responsible for protecting the interests of family members in need. I will do for you whatever you request, Boaz's willingness to fulfill Ruth's request demonstrates his integrity and commitment to the law of levirate marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-10). This phrase underscores the theme of redemption and foreshadows the ultimate redemption found in Christ, who fulfills the law and offers grace. Boaz's actions are a type of Christ, who willingly redeems those who come to Him in faith. Since all my fellow townspeople know this, it indicates the communal nature of ancient Israelite society, where personal reputations were well-known and significant. The mention of "fellow townspeople" suggests that Ruth's actions and character have been observed and discussed within the community, reflecting the importance of communal relationships and accountability in biblical times. That you are a woman of noble character, Ruth's reputation as a "woman of noble character" aligns with the description of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31:10-31. This phrase highlights her loyalty, hard work, and moral integrity, which have earned her respect and admiration. It also connects to the broader biblical theme of God honoring those who live righteously and faithfully, regardless of their background or nationality, as Ruth was a Moabite. Ruth 3:12 Yes, it is true that I am a kinsman-redeemer. In ancient Israel, the concept of a kinsman-redeemer (Hebrew: "goel") was a provision in the Mosaic Law that allowed a close relative to redeem or buy back a family member or their property in times of need (Leviticus 25:25-28). This role was crucial in maintaining the family lineage and property within the tribe. Boaz acknowledges his position as a kinsman-redeemer, which highlights his willingness to fulfill this duty. This concept is a type of Christ, who is the ultimate Redeemer for humanity, purchasing us with His sacrifice (Ephesians 1:7), but there is a redeemer nearer than I. Boaz demonstrates integrity and adherence to the law by acknowledging the presence of a closer relative who has the first right to redeem. This reflects the importance of following God's established order and respecting family rights. The mention of a nearer redeemer introduces a tension in the narrative, emphasizing the legal and cultural procedures of the time. It also foreshadows the resolution of Ruth's situation, as Boaz's actions align with God's providential plan. This mirrors the biblical theme of God's sovereignty and the unfolding of His redemptive purposes, as seen in other scriptures like Romans 8:28. Ruth 3:13 Stay here tonight. In the context of ancient Israel, it was customary for travelers to seek shelter for the night, especially in rural areas like Bethlehem. Boaz's invitation for Ruth to stay was a gesture of protection and care, ensuring her safety from potential harm. This reflects the cultural norms of hospitality and protection for women, especially widows, who were vulnerable in society. And in the morning, if he wants to redeem you, good. Let him redeem you. The concept of redemption here refers to the Levirate marriage and the role of the kinsman-redeemer (goel), a practice outlined in Deuteronomy 25:5-10. This law provided for a close relative to marry a widow to preserve the family line and property. Boaz acknowledges the presence of a closer relative who has the first right to redeem Ruth, demonstrating his integrity and adherence to the law. But if he does not want to redeem you, as surely as the LORD lives, I will. Boaz's oath "as surely as the LORD lives" underscores the seriousness and binding nature of his promise. This phrase is a common biblical expression used to affirm truthfulness and commitment (e.g., 1 Samuel 14:39). Boaz's willingness to redeem Ruth if the closer relative declines highlights his role as a type of Christ, who redeems humanity out of love and commitment. Now lie here until morning. Boaz's instruction for Ruth to remain until morning was likely for her protection and to avoid any scandal or misunderstanding that might arise from her leaving in the middle of the night. This reflects the cultural importance of maintaining a woman's reputation and the care Boaz had for Ruth's well-being. It also signifies a period of waiting and trust in God's provision, paralleling the believer's trust in God's timing and plan. Ruth 3:14 So she lay down at his feet until morning. This phrase indicates Ruth's obedience and trust in Naomi's plan, as well as her respect for Boaz. Lying at his feet was a cultural gesture of humility and submission, not an act of impropriety. The threshing floor was a public place, and Ruth's actions were in line with the customs of the time, seeking protection and provision through a kinsman-redeemer. This act can be seen as a type of the believer's submission to Christ, seeking refuge and redemption. But she got up before anyone else could recognize her. Ruth's early departure underscores the importance of maintaining her and Boaz's reputations. In a small community like Bethlehem, where everyone knew each other, discretion was crucial. This action reflects the biblical principle of avoiding even the appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22). It also highlights Ruth's wisdom and integrity, ensuring that no misunderstanding could arise from her presence at the threshing floor. Then Boaz said, "Do not let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor." Boaz's instruction to keep Ruth's visit confidential demonstrates his protective nature and concern for her honor. In the cultural context, a woman's presence at the threshing floor could be misinterpreted, potentially damaging her reputation. Boaz's actions reflect his righteousness and foreshadow Christ's role as a protector and redeemer of His people. This also aligns with the biblical theme of God overseeing and protecting His people, as seen in Psalm 91:4. Ruth 3:15 And he told her, "Bring the shawl you are wearing and hold it out." In the cultural context of ancient Israel, a shawl or cloak was a common garment used for warmth and carrying items. Boaz's request for Ruth to hold out her shawl signifies a gesture of provision and protection. This act symbolizes Boaz's willingness to care for Ruth and Naomi, reflecting the kinsman-redeemer role, which is a type of Christ who provides and protects His people. When she did so, he poured in six measures of barley and placed it on her. The six measures of barley represent a generous provision, indicating Boaz's commitment to Ruth and Naomi's well-being. Barley was a staple grain, and this gift would have been a significant amount, ensuring sustenance. The number six, often associated with incompleteness in biblical numerology, may suggest that the full redemption is yet to come, pointing to the future complete redemption through Christ. Then he went into the city. Boaz's return to the city signifies his intention to fulfill his promise to Ruth by addressing the legal matters of redemption at the city gate, where such transactions were conducted. This action underscores his integrity and determination to act righteously, paralleling Christ's fulfillment of the law and His role as our Redeemer. Ruth 3:16 When Ruth returned to the city, Naomi asked her, "How did it go, my daughter?" Naomi's inquiry shows her deep concern and hope for Ruth's future. The term "my daughter" indicates a close, affectionate relationship, transcending the typical mother-in-law and daughter-in-law dynamic. This reflects the Hebrew custom of familial bonds and the importance of kinship. Naomi's question also highlights the suspense and uncertainty surrounding Ruth's encounter with Boaz, a pivotal moment in their redemption story. Then Ruth told her all that Boaz had done for her. Ruth's recounting of Boaz's actions underscores his role as a kinsman-redeemer, a concept rooted in Levitical law (Leviticus 25:25-55), where a relative could redeem a family member in distress. Boaz's kindness and generosity foreshadow Christ's redemptive work for humanity. This moment also emphasizes the providence of God in orchestrating events for the welfare of His people, a recurring theme in the narrative. Ruth 3:17 And she said, This phrase introduces Ruth's report to Naomi, highlighting the importance of communication and accountability in relationships. It reflects the cultural norm of sharing news and developments with family members, especially in matters of provision and protection. "He gave me these six measures of barley." The six measures of barley symbolize Boaz's generosity and his role as a provider. In the ancient Near Eastern context, barley was a staple grain, and this gift signifies abundance and care. The number six, often associated with incompleteness in biblical numerology, may suggest that Boaz's actions are part of a larger, unfolding plan. This act of giving also prefigures Christ's provision for His people, as Boaz is a type of Christ, the kinsman-redeemer. For he said, This phrase indicates Boaz's intentionality and thoughtfulness. His words carry authority and purpose, reflecting his character as a man of integrity and foresight. It underscores the importance of spoken promises and the weight they carry in biblical narratives. "Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed." Boaz's instruction to Ruth not to return empty-handed highlights his understanding of Naomi's situation and his desire to bless her. This reflects the cultural value placed on family loyalty and support. The term "empty-handed" connects to Naomi's earlier lament in Ruth 1:21, where she describes returning from Moab empty-handed. This is a direct response to this, symbolizing God's restoration and blessing. This act foreshadows the ultimate redemption and fullness found in Christ, who fills the spiritual emptiness of humanity. Ruth 3:18 Wait, my daughter, Naomi addresses Ruth with a term of endearment, highlighting their close relationship. This reflects the familial bond and loyalty that Ruth has shown by staying with Naomi. The term "wait" suggests patience and trust in God's timing, a recurring theme in Scripture, as seen in Psalm 27:14, which encourages believers to wait on the Lord until you find out how things go. This phrase indicates anticipation and uncertainty about the outcome of Ruth's proposal to Boaz. It reflects the cultural practice of seeking a kinsman-redeemer, as outlined in Leviticus 25:25-55, where a relative could redeem a family member in distress. The outcome is uncertain, but there is hope in the process. For he will not rest, Boaz is portrayed as a man of action and integrity, committed to resolving the situation. This mirrors the character of God, who is depicted as a redeemer who does not rest until His purposes are fulfilled, as seen in Isaiah 62:1. Boaz's diligence foreshadows Christ's redemptive work, who also did not rest until He accomplished salvation, unless he has resolved the matter today. The urgency in Boaz's actions reflects the cultural importance of resolving legal and familial obligations promptly. This resolution is crucial for Ruth and Naomi's future security. The immediacy also points to the certainty of God's promises, as seen in 2 Corinthians 1:20, where all promises find their "Yes" in Christ. Boaz's role as a redeemer is a type of Christ, who resolves the matter of sin and redemption for humanity.