

Dr. David Howard, Joshua - Ruth, Session 32, Exposition of Ruth Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 32, Exposition of Ruth, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. David Howard's lecture expounds on the Book of Ruth, focusing on its narrative arc of **emptying and filling**. The first chapter details Naomi's family tragedy and Ruth's unwavering loyalty. Chapter two introduces Boaz, who shows kindness to Ruth. Chapter three depicts Ruth's bold approach to Boaz, initiating a redemptive process. Finally, chapter four resolves the narrative with Boaz marrying Ruth, ensuring the continuation of Naomi's family line and foreshadowing the lineage of King David.

**2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 32 – Double click icon to
play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (Old Testament → Historical Books → Joshua-Ruth).**



**Howard_Josh_Ruth
_Session32.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 32, Exposition of Ruth

Okay, here's a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. David Howard's lecture on the Book of Ruth:

Briefing Document: Dr. David Howard on the Book of Ruth

Source: Excerpts from "Howard_Josh_Ruth_EN_Session32_RuthExp.pdf"

Overall Theme: The book of Ruth is presented as a narrative of "emptying and filling," focusing on a family experiencing loss and hardship, ultimately finding redemption and restoration through God's providence and the loyalty of key individuals. It highlights themes of loyalty, redemption, and the inclusion of outsiders into God's people, with a clear connection to the lineage of King David.

Key Ideas and Facts:

1. Chapter 1: Emptying and Bitterness

- **The Setup:** The story begins with a famine in Israel that forces Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their two sons to relocate to Moab. Elimelech and both sons die, leaving Naomi with her two Moabite daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth.
- *"In the first chapter, we see what we might call a godly family emptied by the deaths of people."*
- **Naomi's Decision:** Naomi, facing utter loss and bitterness, urges her daughters-in-law to return to their families in Moab. She believes her own life is desolate and offers no future for them.
- *"It is exceedingly bitter to me, for your sake, that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me."*
- **Orpah's Departure, Ruth's Loyalty:** Orpah eventually leaves, but Ruth makes a powerful declaration of loyalty to Naomi, choosing to go with her to Bethlehem.
- *"No, don't send me away, because where you go, I will go. Where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people. Your God, my God."*
- **Naomi's Return to Bethlehem:** Naomi, now bitter and feeling abandoned by God, returns to Bethlehem with Ruth. She asks to be called "Marah" (bitter) instead of "Naomi" (pleasant/beautiful). She perceives her life as having been emptied and considers the Almighty to be the source of her suffering.

- *"Don't call me Naomi, call me Marah. The word Marah means bitter, and the word Naomi is related to the word for beautiful or pleasant. So, a huge change in character and fortunes for Naomi... I went away full. He's brought me back empty."*
- **Hope Amidst Hardship:** The chapter ends with the arrival in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest, a hint of potential future blessing after the earlier famine and hardship.

2. Chapter 2: Favor and Providence

- **Ruth Gleaning:** Ruth goes to the fields to glean, a provision for the poor in Mosaic Law. This is where she encounters Boaz, a wealthy and kind relative of Elimelech.
- *"So Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him...And so, she sets out, goes to the field after the reapers in verse three, and it says she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz. Just happened upon it. Coincidence. Or maybe there's God's providence there as well."*
- **Boaz's Kindness:** Boaz demonstrates great generosity towards Ruth, allowing her to glean, providing her with protection, and inviting her to eat with him. He recognizes her reputation for loyalty to Naomi.
- **Refuge under God's Wings:** Boaz says to Ruth, *"A full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."* This imagery of God providing shelter and protection emphasizes the theme of refuge.
- **Generosity and Sympathy:** The text highlights the sympathetic nature of all the characters: Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz.

3. Chapter 3: Rest and Redemption

- **Naomi's Plan:** Naomi, recognizing Ruth's loyalty, seeks a secure future for her. She sends Ruth to Boaz with specific instructions for how to approach him. She wants to find "rest" for Ruth.
- *"My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you?"*
- **Ruth's Bold Action:** Ruth follows Naomi's instructions, going to where Boaz is sleeping and asking him to "spread his wings" over her, acknowledging him as a "redeemer."

- *"Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer."* The phrase echoes the previous mention of taking refuge under the wings of God in chapter 2.
- **Boaz's Respect and Readiness:** Boaz recognizes Ruth's virtue and willingness to marry him, rather than a younger man. He confirms that he's a redeemer, but reveals there is a closer relative who has first right to redeem and marry Ruth.
- *"You have made this last kindness greater than the first, in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or old... I'll do everything that you ask for because everybody knows that you are a worthy woman."*
- **The Idea of Rest:** The chapter is bookended by references to the idea of "rest," highlighting the desired outcome of security and stability for Ruth and Boaz.

4. Chapter 4: Redemption and Restoration

- **Boaz's Action:** Boaz goes to the city gate and arranges a meeting with the closer kinsman-redeemer. Boaz uses existing customs and the presence of the city elders to legally negotiate the redemption.
- **The Kinsman's Reluctance:** The closer kinsman is initially willing to redeem the land but refuses to marry Ruth because it would threaten his own inheritance.
- **Boaz Redeems:** Boaz is free to fulfill his role as kinsman-redeemer, buying the land and taking Ruth as his wife.
- *"When the Redeemer said to Boaz, take it for yourself, he took his sandal off."*
- **Blessing and New Life:** The people bless Ruth and Boaz, and she gives birth to Obed, who becomes the grandfather of King David. Naomi's life is restored and filled with joy, as the women say Boaz is "restorer of life".
- **Genealogy and Davidic Lineage:** The story concludes with the genealogy that connects the events to the lineage of David, emphasizing God's working through these seemingly ordinary people to bring about His larger purposes.
- *"He's the father of Jesse, father of David. So, there's the beautiful story ending in the ancestry of David."*

Key Takeaways:

- **God's Providence:** The book illustrates God's hand working behind the scenes, guiding events and bringing about blessings, even amidst hardship.

- **Loyalty and Covenant:** Ruth's profound loyalty to Naomi is a central theme, serving as a model for relationships and covenantal faithfulness.
- **Redemption and Inclusion:** The story highlights the concept of kinsman redemption and demonstrates the inclusion of a Moabite woman into the people of Israel. Ruth's faith in the God of Israel is highlighted.
- **From Emptiness to Fullness:** The book depicts a movement from loss and despair ("emptying") to restoration and blessing ("filling"), emphasizing that God is the one behind this restoration.
- **The Ancestry of David:** The book of Ruth is ultimately tied to the larger story of God's plan of salvation through the lineage of David, highlighting the importance of these seemingly small narratives in God's grand scheme.

This briefing provides a detailed analysis of the key themes and ideas presented in the provided source material, offering a framework for further understanding the Book of Ruth.

4. Study Guide: Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 32, Exposition of Ruth

Ruth: A Comprehensive Study Guide

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What is the significance of the famine in the opening of the book of Ruth?
2. Why does Naomi encourage her daughters-in-law to return to their families?
3. What does Ruth's declaration in Ruth 1:16-17 signify?
4. What is the wordplay behind Naomi asking to be called "Marah"?
5. What is the purpose of gleaning in the fields, and why does Ruth participate in it?
6. How does Boaz show his generosity towards Ruth?
7. Why does Naomi send Ruth to the threshing floor, and what does she instruct her to do?
8. How does Ruth identify Boaz as a "redeemer" in chapter 3?
9. Why is the closer relative unable to fulfill his duty as a kinsman-redeemer?
10. How does the book of Ruth connect to the lineage of King David?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The famine sets the stage for the family's departure from Bethlehem and creates the initial hardship that the characters face. It also serves as a backdrop for the eventual return and the contrast between emptiness and fulfillment.
2. Naomi urges her daughters-in-law to return home because she feels she has no future to offer them and wants them to find rest and new husbands in their own land. She feels her own life is hopeless.
3. Ruth's declaration is a profound statement of loyalty and commitment, not only to Naomi but also to her God. It signifies her adoption of a new people and faith.
4. The wordplay shows a contrast in names reflecting the change in Naomi's circumstances. Naomi means "pleasant," but Marah means "bitter," reflecting her grief and sense of loss.

5. Gleaning is a provision for the poor, allowing them to gather leftover grain from the fields. It is a way for the poor, like Ruth, to get food. Ruth participates in this to provide for herself and Naomi.
6. Boaz displays generosity by allowing Ruth to glean in his fields, providing her with water, and inviting her to eat with the reapers. He also instructs his workers to leave extra grain for her.
7. Naomi sends Ruth to the threshing floor as part of a plan to secure a future for her. She instructs Ruth to uncover Boaz's feet to make a claim of marriage.
8. Ruth uses the word "redeemer" (goel) to identify Boaz as the nearest male relative who could take on the responsibility of marrying her and redeeming her family's land. She connects his potential redemption to the concept of divine wings.
9. The nearer kinsman declines the responsibility of redeeming Ruth and the land because he fears it will jeopardize his own inheritance and the customs associated with this responsibility.
10. The book of Ruth culminates in the birth of Obed, who becomes the grandfather of King David, thereby linking Ruth, a Moabite, to the royal lineage of Israel.

Essay Questions

Answer each of the following questions in a 4-5 paragraph essay.

1. Explore the theme of loyalty in the Book of Ruth, focusing on the relationships between Naomi and Ruth, and Ruth and Boaz. How do their actions and words exemplify loyalty and covenant relationships?
2. Discuss the concept of "emptying and filling" as it is presented in the Book of Ruth. How does the narrative transition from loss and bitterness to restoration and fullness?
3. Analyze the role of the kinsman-redeemer in the Book of Ruth. What are the legal and social responsibilities associated with this role, and how does Boaz fulfill them?
4. Examine the significance of Ruth's status as a Moabite woman in the context of the Book of Ruth. How does she come to be accepted into Israelite society, and what does this suggest about God's grace?

5. How do the actions of the characters in the book of Ruth highlight the providence and hand of God? Discuss specific instances that exemplify this.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Bethlehem:** A town in Judah, the home of Elimelech and Naomi, and the setting for much of the story.
- **Boaz:** A wealthy and honorable relative of Elimelech who becomes Ruth's kinsman-redeemer and husband.
- **Chemosh:** The chief god of the Moabites, whom Ruth rejects in favor of the God of Israel.
- **Ephah:** A unit of measurement for grain, about two-thirds of a bushel.
- **Eshet Chayil:** A Hebrew term meaning "woman of valor" or "worthy woman," used to describe Ruth.
- **Famine:** A severe shortage of food that forces Elimelech's family to leave Bethlehem, initiating the story's events.
- **Goel (Kinsman-Redeemer):** A male relative with the responsibility to redeem property or family members who have fallen into hardship, ensuring family continuity.
- **Gleaning:** The practice of collecting leftover crops from the fields after the harvest, a legal provision for the poor.
- **Marah:** Hebrew for "bitter," the name Naomi asks to be called after the deaths of her husband and sons.
- **Moab/Moabite:** An ancient region and people east of the Dead Sea, Ruth's homeland and cultural background.
- **Naomi:** Elimelech's wife and Ruth's mother-in-law, who experiences great loss and returns to Bethlehem.
- **Obed:** The son of Boaz and Ruth, and the grandfather of King David.
- **Orpah:** One of Naomi's daughters-in-law, who returns to Moab instead of staying with Naomi.

- **Redeemer:** Boaz, is the "goel" or kinsman-redeemer, who assumes the responsibility of marrying Ruth and ensuring the continuation of her family's line and their land.
- **Ruth:** A Moabite woman who marries into an Israelite family, demonstrates remarkable loyalty, and becomes part of the lineage of King David.
- **Threshing Floor:** A flat area where grain is separated from the stalks, this place plays a key role in Naomi's plan to get a future for Ruth.

5. FAQs on Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 32, Exposition of Ruth, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on the Book of Ruth

1. **What is the central theme of the Book of Ruth, as highlighted in the provided source?** The book of Ruth is presented as an interplay between the ideas of emptying and filling. The first chapter depicts a godly family emptied by death and hardship, while the latter chapters show this same family being filled with new life and hope through the union of Ruth and Boaz and the birth of their son, Obed.
2. **What specific hardships did Naomi and her family face that led to their "emptying?"** Naomi's family, including her husband Elimelech, and her two sons, left Bethlehem due to a famine in the land. Subsequently, her husband died, and then both of her sons also died after marrying Moabite women, leaving Naomi and her two daughters-in-law widowed and without male heirs. This series of losses left her in a state of significant grief and loss.
3. **Why does Naomi urge her daughters-in-law to return to their own families, and what does this reveal about her character?** Naomi, believing herself to be too old to remarry and have more sons, encourages her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, to return to their own families in Moab where they might find new husbands and secure their futures. This act demonstrates her selflessness and concern for the well-being of the young women, as she doesn't want them to suffer with her.
4. **What makes Ruth's declaration to Naomi so significant, and what does it reveal about Ruth's character and faith?** Ruth's declaration, "Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God," is a powerful statement of loyalty and commitment. It's significant because she, a foreigner from Moab, chooses to abandon her own culture and religion to embrace Naomi's way of life and faith. This shows Ruth's deep love, fidelity and willingness to embrace the Israelite religion despite its difficulty and strangeness.

5. **How does the character of Boaz contribute to the unfolding events in the story?** Boaz is introduced as a "worthy man" and relative of Naomi's deceased husband. He exhibits exceptional kindness and generosity towards Ruth, allowing her to glean in his fields and providing her with protection and additional food. His character embodies justice and compassion, and he ultimately plays a crucial role as the kinsman-redeemer, eventually marrying Ruth and restoring Naomi's family line. He also serves as a protector and provider to Ruth, reflecting God's care for them.
6. **What is the significance of the concept of "wings" in the book of Ruth?** The image of "wings" is used metaphorically in the book, both in Ruth's seeking refuge under the wings of the Lord, and when she asks Boaz to spread his "wings" over her. This alludes to protection, shelter, and divine providence. Ruth seeks refuge under the wings of God and then asks Boaz to do the same, implying he acts as an earthly representation of God's protective care.
7. **What is the role of the kinsman-redeemer, and how does it play out in the book of Ruth?** The kinsman-redeemer is a close relative who has the responsibility of purchasing the land of a relative who had fallen on hard times and, in some cases, marrying the widow of a relative to preserve the family line. In the Book of Ruth, Boaz fulfills this role by buying back Elimelech's land and marrying Ruth after the first, closer kinsman declines. This process is essential for ensuring the family's survival and continuity.
8. **How does the Book of Ruth connect to the lineage of King David, and what significance does this have within the broader biblical narrative?** The story concludes with the birth of Obed, the son of Ruth and Boaz, who is identified as the grandfather of King David. This genealogical link places Ruth, a Moabitess, within the ancestry of Israel's most revered king. This connection underscores that God works through all people, even foreigners, to fulfill His larger purposes. The end of the book also connects to larger biblical themes of redemption, family, and hope for the future of God's people.