



REDEMPTION

Studies in Ruth

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Growing in Spirit & Truth

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A Bitter Pill to Swallow Ruth 1-2



Even when we're "lost at sea" Jesus is God's life preserver to rescue or redeem us.

The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- **Worship**—You were planned for God's pleasure
- **Fellowship**—You were formed for God's family
- **Discipleship**—You were created to become like Christ
- **Ministry**—You were shaped for serving God
- **Evangelism**—You were made for God's mission

Before the advent of modern medicine some pills, like the one for malaria, whole very helpful, were also bitter to the taste. These "bitter pills to swallow", had the desired healing effect, though. Similarly, many life situations are bitter at first, but later work out very well. This is the story of Ruth. Set in the period of the judges it opens with a "bitter pill"; there is a famine in Israel, leading Elimelech and Naomi to move their family to Moab. While there unanticipated losses are experienced. First, Elimelech dies, and then both of their sons, leaving Naomi and their wives, Ruth and Orpah, widows. So Naomi, having heard that Israel's famine was over, decided to return. When Orpah and Ruth told her they

would go with her she told them to stay and blessed them. They could not wait for her to bear more sons to be their husbands. Orpah agreed, but Ruth insisted on going. Rather than worshipping her Moabite god, she vowed to go where Naomi went, and to make her people and her God to be hers as well. This demonstration of unflinching loyalty was the greatest resource Naomi had as Ruth returned and faithfully provided for her. The home folks were surprised to see Naomi after ten years, but she told them of the "bitter pill" God had given her, saying that He had brought her back empty. The fact that she had Ruth would show this statement to be false. Having returned during harvest Ruth imme-

diately went out to glean and God led her to the field of their nearest kinsman, Boaz, who showed her unexpected liberality. When he saw her he told her to stay in his field because he had told his servants to take care of her. When she asked why he informed her that he knew what she had done for Naomi, and then prayed that the Lord would reward her for work since she had come to take refuge under His wings. When she went home she showed Naomi her grain and told her about Boaz. This showed Naomi that God was still at work, even though she had had to swallow a bitter pill.

Study Questions for Ruth 1-2

(For answers go to [http://www.celebrationnet.com/abf/html/study questions](http://www.celebrationnet.com/abf/html/study%20questions))

<p>1. Read Ruth 1:1-2. When does this story occur (v1), who is in it at first (v2), and where does it begin (v2)? What was the situation (v1) and to what did this lead (v1-2)? Do you think this was good or bad?</p>	
<p>2. In 1:3-5 what happened to Naomi (v3)? What did her two sons do (v4) and how long were they there (v4)? What happened next (v5)?</p>	
<p>3. From 1:6-13 what did Naomi do and why (v6)? What did she say to her son's wives and how did she bless them (v7-9)? How did they respond and what did Naomi do (v10-11)? What reasons did she give (v11-13)?</p>	

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Ruth 1-2 - Daily Study Questions (cont)

4. From 1:14-18 how did the 2 wives respond (v14) and what was Naomi's reaction (v15)? How did Ruth answer (v16) and what promises did she make (v16-17)? What resulted (v18)?

5. According to 1:19-22 what was the reaction in Bethlehem (v19) and what did Naomi say (v20-22)? Was she right (v22)? Apply.

6. Using 2:1-3 who is introduced and what was he like (v1)? What was his relationship to Naomi (v1)? What did Ruth request (v2) and what "coincidence" occurred (v3—see 1:2)?

7. In 2:4-7 describe the interchange between Boaz and his workers (v4) and what this reveals about him. What was his question (v5) and the answer (v6-7)?

8. Read 2:8-13. What did Boaz instruct (v8-9) and what had he done (v9)? How did Ruth receive his kindness (v10, 13), and what reason did he give for his actions (v11-12)? What does this say about Ruth's faith in God (v12)?

9. Looking at 2:14-18 in what other ways did Boaz show Ruth kindness (v14, 15, 16, 17)? What were the results (v14, 17, 18)?

10. From 2:19-23 what was Naomi's question and Ruth's answer (v19)? How did Naomi respond and why (v20)? What else did Ruth say (v21), what did Naomi instruct (v22), and what did Ruth do (v23)?

11 Summarize the opening story of Ruth—the "bitter pill" of Naomi and how she responded, how and why Ruth showed loyalty, and the ways Boaz expressed his generosity. Who is the real hero in this story?

Scripture to Remember

"May the Lord reward your work,
and your wages be full from the Lord,
the God of Israel, under whose wings
you have come to seek refuge."

Ruth 2:12 (NASB)

Celebration Fellowship

Help—Hope—Healing

We're on the web

www.thehospitalchurch.com

Life Group Questions—Acting Out—God's Sovereignty

(Using questions from Sunday's sermon, Life Groups meet in homes to build supportive relationships with others at Celebration Fellowship, helping us to grow in Christ.)

1. Throw out the word "sovereignty". What do you think it means? How do you feel when a discussion about "the sovereignty of God" begins? Why?
2. Read Acts 12:1-5. What happened to the church and who was responsible immediately (v1-3)? Who was ultimately responsible? Does this challenge you or comfort you?
3. From 12:6 what does it mean to you that "God is never late, but He is rarely early"? How does this relate to "demanding" vs. "depending" on Him—what is He teaching?
4. Discuss the model of prayer given in Phil 4:6-7. How do you think this explains Peter's ability to sleep in prison? Share a difficult life situation you are going through and how you can apply Phil 4:6-7 to it. Be specific.
5. What does it mean that "peace is not found in trying to bend God's will to ours, but in submitting our will to His"? How does this relate to Phil 4:11-13?
6. Talk about the significance of the shock that the praying believers had over Peter's release. How does this show that "God desires our faith but isn't bound by it"? Apply.
7. Discuss anything else meaningful from the message if you have time.