



# RUTH

»» STUDY GUIDE ««

# RUTH

Study materials were written collaboratively by staff  
and members of New Hope Church.

The background features a series of thin, light gray diagonal lines that create a grid-like pattern. Interspersed among these lines are several solid gray triangles of varying sizes, some pointing upwards and some downwards, creating a dynamic, geometric design.

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# WELCOME

Dear Friend,

You have in your hand a marvelous resource prepared by a special group of people who wish to help you go on an important journey through the Word of God. The book of Ruth, which is the spiritual masterpiece for which this study guide has been written, presents a compelling story of both tragedy and redemption. It allows us to peer into the real and raw souls of a small handful of historical characters. From them we learn much about how to endure suffering, ways to support one another in life's toughest stuff and of a God whose relentless love and mercy knows no bounds.

Take time and give special attention to every aspect of this study guide. As much as you can, seek to engage with friends and family, walking through this material together. There is real power in community! We can learn so much from one another. The opportunity to let our guard down and let others into our lives can be profoundly life-giving. Gifting others with our presence and experience is also exceedingly valuable.

Along the way, be sure to let this simple prayer be yours: "Lord God, I am your humble follower. From your Word teach me about you and change my life accordingly."

With great affection,



Pastor Matthew St. John

## HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

This study of the book of Ruth is designed for the New Hope Church family to grow in understanding of the faithful and redeeming love of God through this account of loss, lament, love and legacy. Even though there are many cultural differences between the lives of these characters and our own, God is never-changing and His expansive power impacts our lives in similar ways today.

### ABOUT THE QUESTIONS

There are several types of questions in each week's study and each serves a different purpose. You may or may not go through all the questions. Feel free to select a few before your group meets or ask your group members which questions they would like to discuss. Some questions may even lend to journaling or self-reflection and prayer.

The first set of questions focuses on studying and discussing scripture. The three types of questions in this section are intended to reinforce an expository study. Even in familiar passages, there is always something new to be found. These questions are designed to draw out new insights. You'll find the following types of questions embedded each week:

- Focus on the section of verses, their relationship to one another and their general format (dialogue, use of questions, language, meaning of names).
- Focus on the content, actual events and actions including cross-referencing with other verses or sources.
- Focus on inference and application including references to patterns and themes emerging throughout the book.

The second set of questions is focused on the three Cs of Life Groups at New Hope Church: **Celebrate** Christ, **Connect** with people, **Contribute** to our world. Choose at least one of these each week to draw your group into discussion that aligns with these values. These questions invite personal responses and give opportunities to discuss action that might be taken.

Lastly, the Family Discussion section is intended to be used by parents of elementary, middle and high school students. It includes a simplified statement about the passage and questions for parents to choose from. You can encourage group members to use these during family Bible study times, meals or travel. Consider discussing these with your group if you have children present during meetings. Use these to engage in a multi-generational discussion.

# ▶ TRAGEDY

## RUTH 1:1-5

**Key Concept:** A Hebrew family's journey away from the land of Israel finds them facing one tragedy after another. With questionable decisions and untimely deaths, they're left destitute and seemingly hopeless.

1. What details are provided about the setting?
2. What tone or significance is there to location, to this time in Israel's history "when the Judges ruled" and to events described in verse 1?
3. What details about the family are not included in the introductory verses? What do you wish we knew?
4. Most Bible translations pause after the first five verses, starting the next section with a hopeful heading. What role does the pause of lament have in this story?

5. At this time, names in most cultures carried significant meaning. Take note of the probable meaning of each of the Hebrew names. What do you notice?
  - a. Elimelech=My God is King Naomi=Sweet & Pleasant Chilion=Dying
  - b. Mahlon=Sick Orpah=Back of Neck Ruth=Friendly Companion
6. We are told twice that this family is from Bethlehem ("House of Bread") in Judah. What can be assumed about their relationship with God? (1:1-2)
7. What might we assume about Elimelech's belief in God based on his decision to sojourn?
8. Moabites were originally descendants of Lot, but by this time had become Baal-worshipping enemies of Israel (Numbers 22:1-25:9). What is the significance of introducing two pagan daughters-in-law to an Israelite family (Deuteronomy 23:3-6)?

With no "seed" to carry on the family line, Elimelech's family hovers precariously on the brink of extinction. And in Israel, there was no greater tragedy than for your family to cease to exist.

Robert L Hubbard Jr.

9. What words could be used to describe this family after reading verses 1–5?

10. What was in Naomi's control? What was not?

11. Elimelech makes a desperate decision to move his family because of the famine in Israel. When have you been desperate and made a quick decision that didn't turn out as you expected? Do you know of anyone who has moved to a foreign land in order to provide for their family's needs?

12. According to these verses Naomi's family relocated because of famine, her husband died, her sons married pagan women, barrenness appears to plague both couples for 10 years and then both sons die. Some have described Naomi as a female Job. In what ways is that true? (Job 1:13–19.)

13. Why do you think stories like Job's and Naomi's are included in the Bible?

## CELEBRATE

Many of us have experienced loss and seasons of great challenge. Some of us see God's hand at work in unexpected ways during these times. Others of us can't see how God was with us until much later. Share about a difficult experience that made it hard to believe God was in control. How did He comfort you? What can you see now looking back at the situation?

## CONNECT

Discuss how people in our families and community can help or hinder us in times of loss or confusion.

## CONTRIBUTE

Reading about a family facing scarcity in the form of famine and death should stir our hearts to response. Discuss some ways your group might be able to contribute to a cause that serves immigrants or underprivileged families in the coming weeks. Explore the *Contribute to the World* section at the back of this book. Pray for God to use this unfolding story of Ruth to remind you of the humanity of those struggling in our community and around the world.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

This family goes through a lot of hard things in these first few verses. How do you think they felt about what was happening to them? Has your family ever had something sad or hard happen? What does God want us to do when we feel sad or scared because of hard times?

# ▶ RELATIONSHIPS

## RUTH 1:6–18

**Key Concept:** In the face of tragedy, hard choices are made for a better future. One decision, among many, is noteworthy for its expression of faith in the one true God.

1. Much of this passage contains Naomi's questions. When is questioning important and when is it unhelpful?
2. The family originally left their home because of the scarcity or lack of food. Several years later Naomi is lacking again, but this time far from home. Why is this significant?
3. What do you think it was like for Naomi to be a widow in a foreign land (1:3)? Why doesn't she want Ruth and Orpah to live as widows in a foreign land (1:8, 1:11, 1:15)? How might the experience of being a foreigner be demanding or hard?

4. In verse 8 Naomi uses the phrase "may the Lord deal kindly" as she speaks to her daughters-in-law. The Hebrew word for this concept of God's loving kindness is "hesed." This is our first introduction to this concept and word in the book of Ruth, but it continues to be an important theme. What does the mention of God's loving kindness make you think about?

5. What was Naomi referring to in verse 11? What was she hoping to convey by saying, "Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands"?

6. What are the six promises Ruth makes to Naomi (16–17)?

7. As Naomi explains the current circumstances to Ruth and Orpah, what do we learn about her beliefs and understanding of God?

Ruth emerges, not as a passive, deferential demure woman, but as a surprisingly gutsy risk-taker. The young Moabite widow discards cultural protocol, her own hopes of happiness, and even plain reason when she embraces Naomi's terrifying God and binds herself for life to her mother-in-law.

Carolyn Custis James

**8.** Why is Ruth's decision to stay and claim Naomi's God as her God so important and surprising?

**9.** What did Ruth give up in making the decision to stay with Naomi?

**10.** What are the relationships between loss, lament and hope for Naomi? What about for you?

**11.** When urged to choose the gods of security, safety and comfort, do you have the courage to choose God and trust Him to provide those things? When has God called you to sacrifice in order to have deeper connection with others or with Him?

## CELEBRATE

Ruth, along with several others in the Old Testament, foreshadow the life of Jesus in the way they sacrifice for others. It is easy to see what she is giving up socially and culturally in these verses. Talk about the sacrifice of Jesus with your group. How much more significant was it when He laid down His life for us? In what ways can we echo the gospel in the way we treat others?

## CONNECT

The bond between these two women seems to be strong and getting stronger. They have been through a lot together. Although they have very different backgrounds and cultures, their shared experiences and desire for a fresh start bring them together. What unexpected relationships do you have in your life and what has bonded you to those people?

## CONTRIBUTE

Both Naomi and Ruth were completely destitute by the standards of that day. It would seem that neither had anything to give because they were so needy. Are you allowing others, especially those who are disadvantaged, to teach you something? In what ways can we dismantle the link between power and dignity by empowering those with few resources to contribute to the world?

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

In these verses, Ruth decides to give up the comfort of her home and friends in order to help Naomi. Why is it hard to put other people first sometimes? Jesus makes it clear that if we follow Him, we should be learning to love other people and let them be first (John 15:12-13). Besides just sharing toys with our brothers and sisters, what can we give up in order to help others?



# ▶ BITTERNESS

## RUTH 1:19–22

**Key Concept:** The widows' return to Bethlehem underscores the pain of tragedy and loss. Bitterness is one of the prevailing responses to all that has transpired.

1. Why is the time of the year important (verse 22)?
2. When the two women arrive in Bethlehem, people question if it really is Naomi. Why do you think they may not recognize her?
3. In the Bible, we often read names that have special meaning in the original Hebrew or Greek language. Naomi asks for a name change in light of her circumstances. If we understand 1:20 to say, "Don't call me Pleasant. Call me Bitter," what does it tell us about Naomi's level of hope for the future?

4. What do you think Naomi was "full" of when her family left Bethlehem (21)? How have you reacted when your life went from "full" to "empty"?
5. Read Job 29:2–6. How is Naomi's entry speech similar or different from what Job expresses?
6. In Naomi's bitterness, what was she forgetting about Ruth? What specific blessings might you be forgetting in your bitter circumstances?
7. How do you think Ruth feels as she hears her mother-in-law say she has returned "empty," meaning she has nothing?

Naomi, Ruth  
and Orpah needed  
God to be near. For  
those of us wading through  
these days where we just don't  
know what to do, knowing God  
is near is comforting.

Nicki Koziarz

8. Why do you think verse 22 reminds us that Ruth is a Moabite and that they are returning from Moab?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Ruth has recently given herself to the God of Naomi. Now she finds herself in this foreign land because of that choice. What overwhelming experiences did you have when you first began to follow Jesus?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. Naomi sounds defeated in 1:21–22. When did a loss or season of discouragement make you want to quit something? What did you decide to do? Who or what helped you to make the decision?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. How can we embrace the tension of the will and expansive power of God with the very real suffering we face?

## CELEBRATE

Even though Naomi says that God is against her and maybe even believes He has left her, we know that this isn't true. Set aside some time to thank God for His presence and His plan for our lives, even when we are suffering. Read Hebrews 4:15 and Psalm 56:8 to be reminded that not only can Jesus relate to our suffering, but God knows every tear we cry when we are in pain.

How can certainty in our identity as God's children ensure that His mission for us remains intact, even if life turns out differently than we hoped?

## CONNECT

Suffering is inevitable for all people. Choosing to follow Christ guarantees pain and heartache. Who do you want beside you when you go through something difficult? Who in this group do you want to thank for walking through a hard season with you? How can you grow in relationships with others so that you can give and receive support in hard times?

## CONTRIBUTE

Even though Ruth says nothing in these first few moments after they arrive, we can almost feel her anxiety as people approach and begin asking questions. This community would have been very different from the one she was used to. Can you think of a time when you visited or moved to a foreign land? What things can ease the tension or anxiety in that situation? If you don't know, seek out someone who does and learn from them. Discuss how you could welcome new neighbors, classmates of your children or families to our church as they arrive to a new place as Ruth did.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

Ruth goes with Naomi to a place she had never been before. Do you remember your first day of school, camp or moving to a new neighborhood? Do you remember how many things there were to learn and try to understand? It may have been scary and exciting, but you probably had a lot of questions. You may have even missed home or the place we used to live. How can God help us in those times? How can we help others when they are new to our groups or community?

# ► PROVISION

## RUTH 2:1-3

**Key Concept:** In the providence of God, a scenario is orchestrated wherein the destitute widows are generously aided by a mighty man of valor.

1. Boaz is described as a “worthy man, a man of good standing of the clan of Elimelech.” What traits or deeds do you suppose he possessed to be designated as worthy? We don’t often hear people described that way in our society. Why do you think that is? If we did hear someone described that way, do you think it would convey the same meaning as for Boaz?
2. With this description in mind, how is Boaz a contrast to Naomi and Ruth? How might the two women be described at this time in their lives?
3. What is the connection between Naomi and Boaz?

4. In 2:2, Ruth says that she intends to “go to the field and glean among the ears of grain.” Gleaning was and is a common practice in farming cultures. (More information about the gleaning process: [tinyurl.com/NHCRuthWeek4](http://tinyurl.com/NHCRuthWeek4).) What does Ruth’s suggestion of gleaning the fields convey about her focus? Is there a clue that she is not just thinking of her own survival?

5. Ruth was most likely dressed in garments that communicated not only her foreigner status, but her grief and vulnerability. What was Ruth risking in venturing out alone to provide for her mother-in-law?

6. In Leviticus 19:9-10 we find a reference to the expectations for the gleanings after the harvest. The law does not just provide directions, it gives a glimpse at God’s heart. According to these verses, what is God’s desire for His people when they encounter those who are disadvantaged?

Sometimes newcomers have a way of showing us we’ve settled into a narrow, precise obedience—a tidy conformity to the law—that falls short of what God really intends.

Carolyn Custis James

7. Land owners and managers had the choice between living by the letter of the law or the spirit of the law. They would have been well within their rights to allow Ruth to only pass through after both the hired men cut the grain and hired women gathered what they cut. Ruth's bold request was to follow behind the harvesters rather than pick up scraps with the gleaners. Why is it important that they allowed this?

8. The phrase "so it happened" or "it happened that" is used in various versions of this passage, including when Ruth arrives in Boaz's field. Why do you think the author uses this phrase?

## CELEBRATE

What examples do you have from your own life of similar "coincidences" when God was at work to set things up for you? How have you seen His plans as an unexpected blessing?

## CONNECT

Boaz clearly has a reputation of integrity. How can being known for integrity and good standing open doors for us to share Christ as we connect with others? Who do you know that does this well?

Ruth chooses action over passivity in order to provide for her mother-in-law. When have you had this same choice to make? Looking back on that situation in your life, what can you see now about how God was moving?

## CONTRIBUTE

We find out in the next passage that the reason Ruth gets to glean in Boaz's field is because his manager gives permission after she requests it. The manager and Boaz are both aware of who she is because her story as a vulnerable foreigner has made it around town. To respond to people's needs, we need to be aware of their stories. Where do you get your information about hurting, marginalized people around the world and locally? How do you decide who to respond to and how to contribute? If you haven't already, consider getting involved in one of the opportunities listed in the *Contribute to Our World* section of this book.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

Ruth decides to go out and get a job to earn food and money for Naomi and herself. God provides a job with a boss who is really kind even though the work is hard. How has God provided jobs, food and a house for our family? Sometimes we have to work really hard at home or at school. Who has God given you as encouragement when you are working hard?

# KINDNESS

## RUTH 2:4-23

**Key Concept:** In God's mercy, the widows found extraordinary favor at the hands of a worthy man whose overwhelming generosity provides not just food, but hope and joy.

1. Summarize what happened in the story up to this point. What are the themes you are noticing?
2. Why is Ruth's request considered bold? Describe some areas of your life where you need to be bolder.
3. What do we learn about Boaz's faith in God from verses 11 & 12?

4. How does Boaz go above and beyond the requirement of the law in the way he treats Ruth? Review the law in Deuteronomy 24:17-22.

5. At this time, it would have been very uncommon for a man like Boaz to interact with a foreign pagan widow in the way that he did. With that in mind, what is the significance of what he offers Ruth in verses 8-9? What social norms might you have to break to serve the marginalized people around you?

6. Why do you think it is a big deal to Boaz that Ruth has taken such good care of her mother-in-law Naomi? When has someone else's faithfulness inspired you to act with faithfulness?

Ruth just kept bending over and picking up what was in front of her—the big pieces of wheat and the little pieces of wheat. She didn't care what it looked like. Each step was a step of provision, and this became her process to reach the promise God would have for her.

Nicki Koziarz

7. Ruth continues to be called “the Moabite” which could easily be ignored as we get caught up in the story. Many believe this label was given as a way to constantly acknowledge that she was an “other” in this land. How are labels divisive in our current culture and community, even when used passively?

8. Describe a time when you or someone you know faced adversity and had to do things to survive or make ends meet that once seemed unimaginable.

## CELEBRATE

When Ruth returns overflowing with barley in verse 20, Naomi exclaims that the Lord’s “kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead.” Again, this phrase reflects the concept of “hesed.” Although there isn’t an exact equivalent in English, it can be described this way: “Hesed is a strong Hebrew word that sums up the ideal lifestyle for God’s people. It’s the way God intended for human beings to live together from the beginning . . . an active, selfless love that motivates a person to do voluntarily what no one has a right to expect or ask of them” (Custis James 2008). What is the connection between hesed and Jesus?

## CONNECT

Boaz directs Ruth to go with the women working for him (8) and she joins them in a meal at lunchtime (14). These seem to be the first social interactions she has outside of her relationship with Naomi. Boaz gave Ruth more than a job when he let her stay. He offered safety and fellowship in a time when she needed it most. How have groups you have been a part of offered you safety or friendship in a vulnerable or lonely time?

## CONTRIBUTE

Boaz follows the charge that God gave the Israelites to care for the poor and foreigners among them (Leviticus 19:9, 10) by allowing Ruth and others to glean from his land. The gleaning law gives the poor and foreigner access to a mechanism which sustains themselves and their families. How can we, like Boaz, take to heart God’s desire for His people to give the poor and foreigners access to means of sustaining themselves and their families? What does it look like to grant access to means of provision in our society? How does the gleaning provision relate to situations where people stand on street medians, freeway ramps and sidewalks asking for help? What about opportunities we have to donate goods or money to those in need?

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

Boaz tells Ruth that he has heard about her kind actions towards Naomi. He seems almost inspired to be kind because she has been kind, like a kindness chain. Have you seen this happen before with your friends or family? God wants us to be kind and helpful to others so that they can know He loves them. What could you do to start a kindness chain in your school or neighborhood?

# ▶ VISION

## RUTH 3:1-18

**Key Concept:** Sensing that God is on the move, a plan is hatched by the widows to respectfully and thoughtfully secure legal redemption at the hands of the man of valor.

1. It seems as if we are encountering a new Naomi in these verses. Perhaps “Miss Pleasant” is on her way back and “Miss Bitter” is on her way out? What changed for Naomi that caused her to be hopeful and even strategic?
2. Considering what we know about the last 10 years of her life (1:1-5) and the culture, what are the “strikes against” Ruth in terms of eligibility for marriage?
3. Naomi states her motivation in 3:1. Why is this significant?

4. What is the importance of Ruth changing out of her grieving widow garments and into fresh clothing? Some scholars believe they may have even been the garments of a betrothed woman.

5. What is Naomi’s plan for Ruth to do and say? What does Ruth actually do and say, and how does her altered proposal change things?

6. Why do you think Boaz wasn’t offended by Ruth’s proposal even though it broke cultural norms?

She lived out her well-articulated fidelity and presented a model of risk-taking devotion to be emulated.

Robert L. Hubbard

7. In what ways does Boaz hold power over Naomi and Ruth? How could he have responded to her proposal?

8. How does Ruth once again choose courage over caution? Look back through the previous verses to see other moments where she chose courage.

9. When have you had to do something difficult but knew it was the right thing to do? What was the result?

10. We see in verse 11 that Ruth had a remarkable reputation. "All my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman . . ." What might be one or two adjectives that you would want used to describe your reputation?

## CELEBRATE

In ancient Israel, God's provision for widows and their estate was through the legal practice of the kinsman redeemer. Essentially, the laws outlined a plan in which a deceased man's property would be purchased by the man's closest relative in order to keep it in the family. The childless widow would then be married to that relative to ensure a continuation of the family line. How does this tradition from the Mosaic Law factor into the story of Ruth? In what ways does this concept point forward to Christ as the Redeemer?

## CONNECT

In what relationships have you experienced an extravagant gesture? Have you ever asked for something big and been surprised by the response?

## CONTRIBUTE

Boaz provided a place of refuge for Ruth and Naomi by protecting and providing for them. Who is weak or vulnerable around you? How could God use you to be a place of refuge? If not you personally, are you familiar with similar stories?

When have you been in a situation where you had more power or privilege than someone else? How could you or did you leverage your power for their benefit?

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

In these verses Ruth is doing something to help her family. She has to be brave to go to Boaz's house and ask him to help. Describe a time when you needed to be brave. Have you ever had to ask for something that was a really big deal?



# ▶ INTEGRITY

## RUTH 4:1-12

**Key Concept:** Recognizing God's providential care, the man of valor schemes to secure the rights to redeem property and people following the deaths of his extended family.

1. Some scholars find it interesting that we never learn the name of the first-in-line redeemer. Boaz doesn't even say his name. He essentially calls him "Mr. So-and-So." In a story full of meaningful names, why is this left out?
2. In these 12 verses the words "redeem" and "redeemer" are used 11 times. What would those words mean to them at that time? What would it mean to New Testament believers? What does it mean to you?
3. Boaz could not have been viewed as "a worthy man" in the community if he was a childless bachelor. The truth is, he was most likely married with children already. Pursuing the role of kinsman redeemer for Ruth and Naomi meant not only relational complications for him, but also financial ones. Yet Boaz shows a high level of commitment to Ruth. Why is this important?

4. Ruth originally married Mahlon who was a foreigner to Moab. Now we see Boaz welcoming her and pursuing marriage to her even though she is a foreigner in Bethlehem. Why is it significant that both Ruth and Boaz are people who welcome the "other"?

5. Boaz is very strategic in the way he presents the situation to the "first-in-line redeemer" in verses 4 and 5. Why do you think he does this? Why does the man refuse?

6. What do you think Ruth and Naomi did while they waited to hear what had been decided between the potential redeemers?

Moving forward in faith is a call to persevere through the unlikely areas of life. Those who resist the unlikely places are the ones who often miss the greatest movements of God.

Nicki Koziarz

7. Why is it surprising that the witnesses say they hope Ruth will build the house of the Lord in verse 11? Is there any earthly evidence that this new marriage arrangement will produce more children?
  
8. Why do you think the author takes the time to explain the transaction customs for making a deal in this time? What does this custom tell you about trust, community and integrity at that time?
  
9. Although the picture is often painted of Boaz rescuing Ruth, this kinsman redeemer plan is actually about rescuing an entire family line. It's tempting to get caught up in some romantic story of the hero or heroine, but looking closer we see that this rescue mission is a partnership. What does Ruth bring and sacrifice? What about Boaz? How does God orchestrate the union of their hearts and efforts for His glory?
  
10. What was the fruit of Ruth's obedience in going with Naomi back to Israel?

## CELEBRATE

Read Galatians 4:5 and Titus 2:14 aloud and discuss the way in which Jesus was the ultimate redeemer. What did His redemption of us accomplish that no human could accomplish?

## CONNECT

How can Boaz and Ruth be an example for men and women in how to connect with one another, sacrifice for one another and serve others well? What about relationships between people from different cultural and racial backgrounds?

## CONTRIBUTE

How can you bring honesty, loyalty and integrity to your work and relationships to better the community and the world? What standard of integrity and ethics do you find yourself being governed by?

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

Boaz leaves his normal routine to go and do something that will change his life and help two women who really need it. How can your family be more willing to have your days and plans interrupted to help neighbors and the community? Where could your family go or what could you try that would be different than how you usually help?

# ▶ HOPE

## RUTH 4:13-22

**Key Concept:** The man of valor marries the young widow, replacing the tragedies of the past with healing and hope. This sets the stage for a legacy that has both near-term benefit (King David) and long-term impact (Jesus).

1. Why do you think all the dialogue in this passage is from the women of the community and not Naomi or Ruth?
2. Ruth's name is only mentioned once in these verses. The focus seems to be on Naomi. Why might this be?
3. How is God partnering with these two women to accomplish His redemption plan?

4. What is the significance of Ruth being "more to Naomi than seven sons"? How is this different than the way she describes herself in 1:20?

5. Ruth makes one additional sacrifice for Naomi. Reread verse 16 and ask yourself what Ruth must have done for this to happen. What emotions do you think this brought out in both women? What do you think Ruth believes about God now?

6. Naomi became the child's nurse. How is this similar to Moses' mother's experience (Exodus 2)?

This story portrays God as involved in life's ordinary affairs; indeed, they are exactly the arena in which He chooses to operate. It describes how God works through, not despite the everyday faithfulness of His people.

Robert L.  
Hubbard Jr.

7. Compare the last few verses of the book to Job 42:10–17. Do these seemingly parallel stories end the same way?

8. The genealogy listed begins back in verse 12 where we are reminded that Perez is the son of Tamar. What is the significance of four foreigners (three of them women) being mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus the Jewish Messiah? (Matthew 1)

9. Describe a time when you gave much and yet felt God inviting you to sacrifice more for the good of others and for His glory?

10. Obviously, something much larger than just Ruth and Boaz happened here. The Moabites were the descendants of Lot who separated from Abram back in Genesis 13. The Hebrew word used to describe Lot separating is the same word used for Ruth not separating from Naomi. What is the significance of this descendant of Lot reuniting with descendants of Abram and having a child?

## CELEBRATE

It's likely that Ruth and Boaz's son, Obed, would pass along this story of God's faithfulness to his son, Jesse, and then Jesse would pass it along to his son (King) David. Do you know similar stories from your family history? What will you pass on as a celebration of God's provision?

It is important to note the final recorded sacrifice of Ruth as she gives her son to Naomi to be his nurse. As a previously barren woman, this is a huge gesture with her only son. How does this hint at the story of Jesus?

## CONNECT

What roles do the women of the community play in Naomi's life? How might your Life Group or church community do the same for you?

The women of the community describe God as nourishing, redeeming and restoring. Which of these attributes of God do you need to be reminded of most?

## CONTRIBUTE

How does the story of Ruth and Naomi cast a bigger vision for God's calling on your life today, the call to join His rescue mission for the whole world? How can you live more courageously for Him?

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

This story ends with a list of who was related to whom, kind of like a family tree. We recognize some names because their stories are in the Bible and we see how God made and used them to do great things when they grew up. Describe some of the unique things about how God made you. What things do you think He wants you to do with your life? What stories will you pass on to your children and grandchildren about your family?

# OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR WORLD

## **NHC COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**[newhopechurchmn.org/community](http://newhopechurchmn.org/community)**

Community Outreach can help you put your beliefs into action as you discover God's heart for our neighbors. As a church family, we combine our unique gifts, time and finances to provide ministries that meet the needs of others, build community and encourage gospel conversations. If you or your group is interested in working in our community through the Hopebridge Food Shelf, Knitters & Stitchers Group or Prison Ministry, contact [communityoutreach@newhopechurchmn.org](mailto:communityoutreach@newhopechurchmn.org).

## **NHC GLOBAL MINISTRIES**

**[newhopechurchmn.org/global](http://newhopechurchmn.org/global)**

Global Ministries helps equip you to be part of God's mission around the world. We do this by focusing on strategic places sharing His love and good news and assisting in meeting needs. You can participate by joining a short-term ministry team, sponsoring a child in Lebanon, caring for our global partners or hosting international students. Contact [global@newhopechurchmn.org](mailto:global@newhopechurchmn.org).

## **ARRIVE MINISTRIES**

**[arriveministries.org](http://arriveministries.org)**

Arrive Ministries is a Christian non-profit organization dedicated to the cause of refugees and immigrants. It empowers local churches to welcome and serve displaced refugees who resettle in Minnesota. They are comprised of refugees, staff, members of faith communities and volunteers who are learning to see Jesus reflected in the faces of one other. The focus is on stories of men, women and children surviving adversity and enriching our lives as they become our neighbors and friends. New Hope Church has had a relationship with this ministry for several years, primarily through welcoming refugee families to the area and donating needed items as they settle into life in Minnesota. To learn how your Life Group or family can join in this partnership, contact [kpeterson@newhopechurchmn.org](mailto:kpeterson@newhopechurchmn.org).

## **NEW HOPE TREEHOUSE**

**[treehouseyouth.org/locations/new-hope-area-treehouse](http://treehouseyouth.org/locations/new-hope-area-treehouse)**

Located next door to NHC's Hopebridge Center, TreeHouse is a ministry to local at-risk teenagers. Their vision is to reach every at-risk teen so they are loved, feel hope and experience life transformation. There are opportunities to volunteer through tutoring, evening Bible studies or transportation to events. Call 763-533-9667.

## **HENNEPIN COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES**

**[hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/volunteer-human-services-health](http://hennepin.us/your-government/get-involved/volunteer-human-services-health)**

Volunteer as a befriender by providing a couple hours of friendship each month to a vulnerable client. It is an opportunity to encourage self-reliance and recreational, spiritual, cultural, community and multigenerational involvement. Contact [hsph.vcpp.volunteer@hennepin.us](mailto:hsph.vcpp.volunteer@hennepin.us) or 612-348-9900.



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