

The book of Ruth, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, demonstrates the use of hidden messages that enrich the text with double meaning.

There is the obvious surface meaning. But at the same time, there is a prophetic and symbolic meaning as well. The people of the story have representative significance as well as being real and historical. Both of the stories involve the message of redemption.

The hidden message is derived from the use of symbolic language. Symbols have some semblance to something more or something else.

The Bible uses imagery all the time, and Ruth is seen as literal and symbolic. One obvious symbolic use of names are the sons Mahlon (“unhealthy”) and Chilion (“puny”). Who names their children “unhealthy” and “puny”? The book opens with Elimelech's family leaving Bethlehem (“house of bread”) during a famine hinting that they made a mistake. They left the house of bread to enter Moab who was not hospitable.

Moab is the nation that represents inhospitality. They refused to allow Israel passage through their land when they came up from Sinai (Jd.11:17).

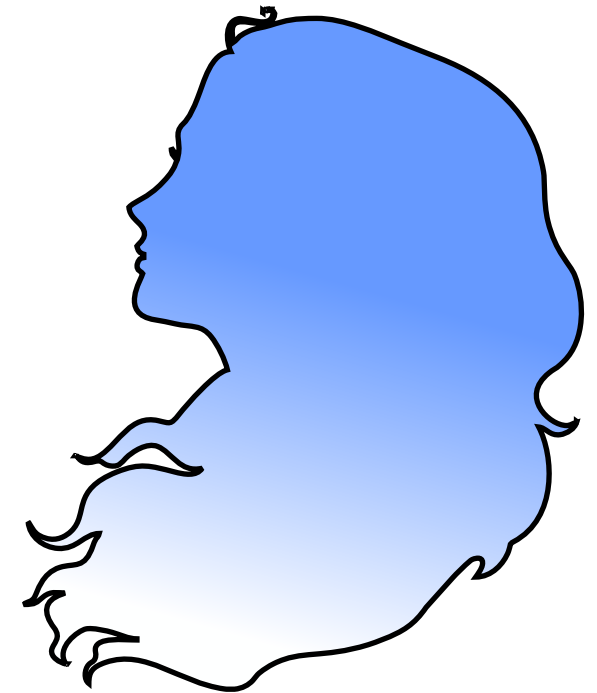
## APPLICATION

1. The book of Ruth is a story for people who cannot imagine anything great could come to ordinary lives of faith.
2. Sometimes God uses us to answer our own prayer like He did with Boaz.
3. God is sovereign, and gracious, even when He seems totally silent.
4. Watching Boaz take care of Naomi and Ruth, who seemingly had no future, we see that God cares for the outcasts of society.
5. Many times God's best comes out of life's worse circumstances.
6. Ruth offers us an insight into how the blessings and guidance of God can be bestowed even in difficult times.
7. Humble people are made even more humble by being treated graciously.



**23304 E Wellesley Ave  
Otis Orchards, Washington 99027  
509-926-9552**

# the Book of Ruth



## Spiritual Significance

**(Representative Meanings)**

# BOOK OF RUTH CHARACTER MODELS



**Elimelech**  
("God is my king")  
**TYPE = ISRAEL**

Married

**Naomi**  
("Pleasant")  
**TYPE = ISRAEL**



- Naomi does not make it easy for Ruth to believe in the God of Israel (**Ru.1:13-15**).
- Naomi thinks God is punishing her while He is working to restore her (**Ru.1:20**). Today, Israel thinks she is the suffering servant (**Is.53**).



**Ruth**

("Compassion" or "Friend")  
**TYPE = GENTILE BRIDE (Church)**

- Ruth chooses to abandon her idol worshiping life (**1:15-17**).
- Ruth does not replace Naomi (**Ru.4:14-15; Rm.11:15,25-26**).
- God ensures we will have all of our needs met like Boaz made sure Ruth would have all that she needed (**Ru.2:7-16**).
- Christians are like Ruth, a Gentile Moabite (**Jn.3:36**). God offers salvation (**Ru.2:12**), first to the Jews then to the Gentiles (**Rm.1:16; 2:10**). [E.g., gleaning, dog under table].
- Ruth asks, "why have I found favor" (**Ru.2:10**). Because God loves to reward those who take refuge in Him.
- Boaz (Jesus) has taken notice of Gentile Ruth, and she is humbled (**Ru.2:10**).
- Ruth bowed down at Boaz's feet (**Ru.2:10**), so we bow down at Christ's feet (**1Pe.5:6; Jm.4:10**).

**Orpah**  
("Neck" or "Fawn")  
**TYPE = THE WORLD**

- She is a Moabitess.
- She agreed with Naomi's logic.
- She chose to "turn away" from Naomi and back to Moab.

Married

**Chilion**  
("Feeble", "Puny")  
**TYPE = ISRAEL**

- Ephrathite of Bethlehem-Judah (**Ru.1:2**).

Sons

**Mahlon**  
("Unhealthy")  
**TYPE = ISRAEL**

- Ephrathite of Bethlehem-Judah (**Ru.1:2**).

Married

**Nearer-Kinsman**  
**TYPE = MOSIAC LAW or FLESH**

- We must keep all the Law. If we fail on one point we are guilty of all (**Jm.2:10**).
- The law only does one thing, condemn.
- The law keeps saying "no," but grace says "yes".
- The nearer-kinsman gave up His right of claim on Ruth as Boaz fulfilled the requirements of the Law (**4:9; Ga.3:13**).

**Unnamed Servant**  
**TYPE = HOLY SPIRIT**

- Boaz is introduced to Ruth by an unnamed servant (**Ru.2:5-6**).
- The unnamed servant spoke what was in Boaz's interests. The HS always testifies of Christ (**Jn.15:26**) and will not speak of himself (**Jn.16:13**).
- Another example is the unnamed servant of Abraham who finds a bride for Isaac the son (**Ge.24**).

**JESUS CHRIST**

**Boaz**

("In Him is Strength")  
**TYPE = JESUS CHRIST**

- Boaz paid the price (**Ru.4:9**), like Christ (**Ga.3:13**), and He did it because He loved us (**Rm.5:8**).
- Boaz (**Ru.2:4**) and Jesus (**Mt.2:1; Mi.5:2**) were redeemers from Bethlehem.
- Boaz is the Lord of the harvest (**Ru.2:5; Mt.9:38**).
- Jesus gives us the bread of life (**Jn.6:35**) just as Boaz gave Ruth bread and wine (**Ru.2:14**).

Married