

Born to Win

The Book of Ruth

by: Ronald L. Dart

Hello, folks. Welcome back to the Weekend Bible Study. I've had several suggestions for where to go next after having finished Ecclesiastics last week. Suggestions include Ruth, Esther, Joshua, Deuteronomy. My present plans call for doing the Book of Ruth, followed by Deuteronomy, then Joshua—Esther could come later. Deuteronomy is an awfully important book and I have never done the whole book verse by verse. Now, all this is subject to change, of course, as the spirit leads but I thought I'd just share with you where I thought we would be going right now. For now, we have a lot of ground to cover—we're going to try to do the whole Book of Ruth today. So grab a cup of tea and a muffin, open your notebook and your Bible to the Book of Ruth and let's read it.

One of the first questions the scholars tend to ask is, "Who wrote this book and when was it written?" The Talmud refers to Samuel as the author of Ruth, but scholars, generally speaking, say: No, Samuel died before David became king and the way in which the author writes the genealogy in Ruth, chapter four—right at the end of the Book of Ruth—supposes that this whole lineage is well known to the people who are reading it. It talks about this child that is born and Naomi takes him, lays him in her lap, and cares for him. And the woman living there said, "Naomi has a son", and they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. This, then, is the family line of Perez. Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nashon, Nashon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz—who is the male lead in this play—and Boaz the father of Obed, who is the father of Jesse, and Jesse is the father of David. Now, what is this book about? Well it's about David, as a matter of fact, about what leads up to him.

I found one curious thing that, kind of, indicates the general era in which this book was written. It is something of an oath and it's of a unique style. The expression is this: "The LORD do so to me and *more also...*" if I don't follow through on what it is that I'm saying or promising or what have you. The expression is found *only* in Ruth, 2 Samuel, and 1 Kings—that narrow band of time right there. It's nowhere else in the Bible, which tends to date the writing of this book broadly. That said, we're talking about the date of *writing*, not necessarily the date of the events. Ruth 1, verse one:

Ruth 1

NIV

¹ In the days when the judges ruled, [...]

Now, you might say, "Once upon a time, a long time ago...".

Ruth 1

NIV

¹ [...] there was a famine in the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab.

² The man's name was Elimelek, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites [...]

Don't confuse that with *Ephraimites*, that's different. They were *Ephrathites* from Bethlehem in Judah. They went to Moab and lived there. Why? Because there was *something to eat* there. There was grain when there wasn't any up in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The expression here in Micah chapter five, verse one:

Micah 5

KJ2000

¹ Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops: he has laid siege against us: they shall strike the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

We're looking ahead in prophecy.

Micah 5

KJ2000

² But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, [*you know, these were Ephrathites*] though you be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Isn't that fascinating? Bethlehem Ephrathah was going to be the birthplace of the Messiah. And, moreover, he says not merely that is just the Messiah, it's one whose "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" which doesn't sound like David, does it?

Ruth 1

NIV

³ Now Elimelek, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons.

⁴ They married Moabite women, one named Orpah [*which I commonly confuse with Oprah*] and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years,

⁵ both Mahlon and Kilion also died [*probably some disease epidemic*], and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

⁶ When Naomi heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them [*in other words, the famine in Israel was over*], she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there.

⁷ With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah

⁸ Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the LORD show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me.

⁹ May the LORD grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband." Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud

¹⁰ and said to her, "We will go back with you to your people."

Naomi's response is interesting because it reflects the customs and the values of an era.

Ruth 1

NIV

¹¹ But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands?"

¹² Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons—

¹³ would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my

daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD's hand has turned against me!"

Now, you kind of have to realize that, in that day and age, women could not just go out and get themselves jobs as a stenographer somewhere, or a cashier in a restaurant, or anything of the sort. If they're going to survive, they need a *man* to take care of them—to earn a living—and then, of course, you're going to bear children for him and so forth. But:

Ruth 1

NIV

¹⁴ At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

¹⁵ "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."

And Ruth's response in the King James Version has entered into our language—it's a beautiful passage. Ruth one, verse sixteen. Ruth said:

Ruth 1

AKJV

¹⁶ And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave you, or to return from following after you: for where you go, I will go; and where you lodge, I will lodge: your people shall be my people, and your God my God:

¹⁷ Where you die, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part you and me.

You know, it's not uncommon to hear that read at weddings but it's not between a woman and her man but between *a mother and her daughter-in-law*.

Ruth 1

NIV

¹⁹ So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?"

Her name—Naomi—by the way, meant "pleasant".

Ruth 1

NIV

²⁰ "Don't call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me Mara [*bitter*], because the Almighty has made my life very bitter.

²¹ I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me."

It's hard to blame her for being depressed—she lost her husband, then her two sons died.

Ruth 1

NIV

²² So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

So, what time of year was this, do you know? It's *Passover*, of course. It was in Passover that the first ripe barley began to be harvested and no one could eat of it—no one could take any part of that crop for any reason—until the firstfruits of it had been presented before the Lord as a wave offering before God—taken in, held up before him, and waved back and forth, giving it to God. So that's where we are starting in Israel. Take a quick break and we'll come right back with chapter two.

Ruth 2

NIV

¹ Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, a man of standing from the clan of Elimelek, whose name was Boaz.

² And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter."

Now, what's this about? Well, in the Law, Leviticus 23 and verse 22:

Leviticus 23

AKJV

²² And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not make clean riddance of the corners of your field when you reap, neither shall you gather any gleaning of your harvest: you shall leave them to the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

In other words, the Israelites were required—once they started that barley harvest—they were not to go right down and have their service go deep into the corner to get every last stalk of green. They left the corners for the poor to come get it. Not only that, but anything that fell to the ground was a part of it. They were able to go in there and *glean*—that is, to pick up the leavings that the harvesters didn't get. The whole idea is: leave something for the poor, which is fascinating, in a way, because God didn't say you have to gather all of it yourself and take it *to* the poor while they sit at home. The poor had to come out and get it.

Ruth 2

NIV

³ So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek.

⁴ Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The LORD be with you!" "The LORD bless you!" they answered.

⁵ Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, "Who does that young woman belong to?"

Aha, an important clue here. Ruth stood out. I don't know if she was taller than the others. I think she was a *strikingly* beautiful woman.

Ruth 2

NIV

⁶ The overseer replied, "She is the Moabite who came back from Moab with Naomi.

⁷ She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.' She came into the field and has remained here from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter."

Everyone knew about this girl. They had heard Naomi's story. They had heard about Ruth's faithfulness to her and that Ruth has been good to Naomi right down the line.

Ruth 2

NIV

⁸ So Boaz said to Ruth, “My daughter, listen to me. [...]”

It’s interesting he said “my daughter”—he’s an older man, mind you. But even then one wonders, well, because of the fact that Naomi was a kinsmen of sorts then he could call her then. He said:

Ruth 2

NIV

⁸ “[...] listen to me. Don’t go and glean in another field and don’t go away from here. Stay here with the women who work for me.

⁹ Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the women. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.”

Now, this is apparently a pretty big favor that he’s doing to her in this circumstance.

Ruth 2

NIV

¹⁰ At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?”

¹¹ Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before.”

And, he might have also added, with a woman who is *poor*.

Ruth 2

NIV

¹² “May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.”

I just think this is so marvelous. I love this man. He is not only a good man, he is eloquent—the way he phrases this and all.

Ruth 2

NIV

¹³ “May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord,” she said. “You have put me at ease by speaking kindly to your servant—though I do not have the standing of one of your servants.”

¹⁴ At mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar.” When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over.

¹⁵ As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, “Let her gather among the sheaves and don’t reprimand her.

¹⁶ Even pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don’t rebuke her.”

Very strict instructions. I have no reason to imagine for a minute that *any* of his servants would have done otherwise, because this is the man they worked for. They knew him, they understood him, and they recognized what was going on here. This kindness to the poor was a *fundamental value* of God.

But I think what's interesting is the grain was not delivered to the door of the poor people—they had to *come and get it*.

Ruth 2

NIV

¹⁷ So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah.

Which is interesting because that is the amount the priests prepared for the offering of first ripe grain. You know, they went out right at sundown. As soon as the sun was down, they cut the harvest of the first grain. They prepared it that night, threshed it out and so forth—I think they even roasted it—during that night and the *next morning* they took it into the temple—an ephah of it—and they waved it back and forth before God as an offering of the firstfruit of the ground. So that's how much she got home with.

Ruth 2

NIV

¹⁸ She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered. [*Apparently, it was remarkable.*] Ruth also brought out and gave her what she had left over after she had eaten enough.

Naomi immediately realized this is unusual; something is going on here.

Ruth 2

NIV

¹⁹ Her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!” Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. “The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz,” she said.

²⁰ “The LORD bless him!” Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. “He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead.” [*Apparently, Boaz had a longstanding reputation of kindness.*] She added, “That man is our close relative; he is one of our guardian-redeemers.”

Now, this is something which I really think an awful lot of people who read the Bible never quite *get*. They know Christ is our redeemer, and “redeemer” comes to mean whatever it is that *Jesus* means to people. But it's a particular term in the Law—the relationship that you have. For example, if you were a thief and you got caught and you couldn't make restitution, they put you on the slave block and they sold you off to the highest bidder. Your near-kinsmen—your brother, you know, somebody close to you—had the right to *redeem* you—that is, to come in there, lay cash on the line in the amount that the owner paid for you, and free you. [See Leviticus 25.] He is your *kinsmen-redeemer*. And so, consequently, this is the kind of thing that existed in Israelite society. You know, the relationships—who you were, who your family was—these things were all very important.

Ruth 2

NIV

²¹ Then Ruth the Moabite said, “He even said to me, ‘Stay with my workers until they finish harvesting all my grain.’”

²² Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It will be good for you, my daughter, to go with the women who work for him, because in someone else's field you might be harmed.”

²³ So Ruth stayed close to the women of Boaz to glean until the barley and wheat harvests were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

Okay, this gleaning from the barley through the wheat harvest was finished—that’s 50 days, from Passover to Pentecost. But in this 50 days, something happened. We will talk about that, after this short break, in chapter three.

Ruth 3

NIV

¹ One day Ruth’s mother-in-law Naomi said to her, “My daughter, I must find a home for you, where you will be well provided for.

² Now Boaz, with whose women you have worked, is a relative of ours. Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor.

³ Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don’t let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking.”

I gather those guys had...the harvest is getting over with, everything is really rolling, they’re having a wonderful time.

Ruth 3

NIV

⁴ “When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do.”

⁵ “I will do whatever you say,” Ruth answered.

You think of so many times you tell somebody, “Do this”, and they will argue with you. Well, Ruth didn’t, bless her heart.

Ruth 3

NIV

⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.

⁷ When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits [*and I’ll bet he was*], he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly [*probably waited for him to start snoring*], uncovered his feet and lay down.

⁸ In the middle of the night something startled the man; he turned—and there was a woman lying at his feet!

That would be a real surprise, wouldn’t it.

Ruth 3

NIV

⁹ “Who are you?” he asked. “I am your servant Ruth,” she said. “Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family.”

Now, the wording here “spread the corner of your garment over me” basically means “take me under your protection, you are the kinsmen-redeemer.” I don’t know how much Ruth really understood about this, but *he* did. It was a part of God’s plan for the restoration of things lost. Go back to Leviticus, chapter 25 and verse 25:

Leviticus 25

NIV

²⁵ “If one of your fellow Israelites becomes poor and sells some of their property, their nearest relative is to come and redeem what they have sold.

²⁶ If, however, there is no one to redeem it for them but later on they prosper and acquire sufficient means to redeem it themselves,

²⁷ they are to determine the value for the years since they sold it and refund the balance to the one to whom they sold it; they can then go back to their own property.”

In other words, he can *redeem* it—he can buy it back.

Leviticus 25

NIV

²⁸ But if they do not acquire the means to repay, what was sold will remain in the possession of the buyer until the Year of Jubilee. It will be returned in the Jubilee, and they can then go back to their property.

The whole idea was: let's not allow one or a few *rich people* gather up all of the property in the land and *dominate* everything that is going on. That is, I think, a *fascinating* concept. So that at the end of a given period of time, you get your property back. I know when we lived in England, we were surprised that there were certain properties that belonged to the crown. You could buy them, but you could only buy them on *long-term leases*—like 50-year, 100-year lease—and at the end of that period of time it went right back to the crown. You could not will it to your children in perpetuity. Now, in Deuteronomy 25, once again chapter 25, this time verse five:

Deuteronomy 25

AKJV

⁵ If brothers dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without to a stranger: [...]

Well, why not? Well, listen on:

Deuteronomy 25

AKJV

⁵ [...] her husband's brother shall go in to her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother to her.

It was really crucial for women—and, you know, a lot of these laws that sound like they're not very good for women actually, in that world, in that society, were designed to protect women and their rights. For, in fact, her husband dies and she's childless, pretty soon that land is going to go back to the family and she will be out somewhere on her own. Okay. He will perform the duty of a husband's brother to her—which means he takes her as a second wife or third wife or whatever it is.

Deuteronomy 25

AKJV

⁶ And it shall be, that the firstborn which she bears shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.

So the property of the dead brother passes on to his son (I think this is really fascinating) even though it was not his genes that went into the son—it was his brother.

Deuteronomy 25

AKJV

⁷ And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, [*You know, he didn't have to do this.*] then

let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuses to raise up to his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.

⁸ Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak to him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her;

⁹ Then shall his brother's wife come to him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done to that man that will not build up his brother's house.

¹⁰ And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that has his shoe loosed.

In other words, it is a *shaming* thing. I think in most cases men went right ahead and did it. I don't know why, for example, they wouldn't unless this woman is *odious* in some way. But, anyway, this is the practice. It's all made for in the Law. And that's what we're running into in Luke [see Luke 20] whereas, you know, this girl's husband had property. There was a right to that property, but *he's dead*. Where does it go? Well that's another question entirely, but the one way to see to it that it *stayed* in the family was a near-kinsmen had to take the woman to be his wife, had to rear up a child in the name of his brother, and that child would inherit just as though his father had lived. Verse 10, now, back in Ruth 3, Boaz speaking:

Ruth 3

NIV

¹⁰ "The LORD bless you, my daughter," he replied. "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character."

You know, that is *really* fascinating because here's a woman—not even Israelite, but who has come back with her mother-in-law to live in Israel—and she's already got a reputation of being a woman of noble character. And, of course, Boaz *himself* being a man of noble character can see it clearly.

Ruth 3

NIV

¹² "Although it is true that I am a guardian-redeemer of our family, there is another who is more closely related than I.

¹³ Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to do his duty as your guardian-redeemer, good; let him redeem you. But if he is not willing, as surely as the LORD lives I will do it. Lie here until morning."

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before anyone could be recognized; and he said, "No one must know that a woman came to the threshing floor." [*protecting her reputation*].

¹⁵ He also said, "Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out." When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and placed the bundle on her. [...]

So we're not down to Pentecost yet. We're still early—we're in the barley harvest, which was the *first* harvest of spring.

Ruth 3

NIV

¹⁵ Then he went back to town.

¹⁶ When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "How did it go, my daughter?" Then she told her everything Boaz had done for her

¹⁷ and added, “He gave me these six measures of barley, saying, ‘Don’t go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’” ¹⁸ Then Naomi said, “Wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens. For the man will not rest until the matter is settled today.”

Naomi had been around long enough, she knew how these things went, and she knew a little bit about Boaz. One more quick break and we’ll go on with the concluding chapter, chapter four, of the Book of Ruth.

Ruth 3

NIV

¹ Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat down there [...]

Now, the gate of the city or a town was, basically, sort of like the courthouse. Trials were held there. Business was conducted there. The reason was because there were witnesses to all the stuff that was done, and they were able to conduct business. It reminds me, in a way, of the small town where I grew up. And, Saturday afternoon, all the farmers came in from all over the county—and, of course, they would set up their wagons and sell their produce and so forth—but the core of everything was the county courthouse square. And everybody who was anybody would be seen there on this day. So when his friend came along—the other kinsmen-redeemer that he had mentioned—Boaz says:

Ruth 4

NIV

¹ [...] “Come over here, my friend, and sit down.” So he went over and sat down.

² Boaz took ten of the elders of the town and said, “Sit here,” and they did so.

Apparently, when Boaz asked you to do something, you did it.

Ruth 4

NIV

³ Then he said to the guardian-redeemer, “Naomi, who has come back from Moab, is selling the piece of land that belonged to our relative Elimelek. [*you know, who was Naomi’s husband*].

⁴ I thought I should bring the matter to your attention and suggest that you buy it in the presence of these seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, do so. But if you will not, tell me, so I will know. For no one has the right to do it except you, and I am next in line.”

Well, that fellow says, “I will redeem it. I’ll buy that piece of property.”

Ruth 4

NIV

⁵ Then Boaz said, “On the day you buy the land from Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the dead man’s widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property.”

⁶ At this, the guardian-redeemer said, “Then I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it.”

⁷ (Now in earlier times in Israel, for the redemption and transfer of property to become final, one party took off his sandal and gave it to the other. This was the method of legalizing transactions in Israel.)

That's kind of interesting, you know, you have to have witnesses to it being done and, in any type of a contract, there has to be what is called "consideration" You and I could sit down, and we sign a contract, and I give you earnest money for the house I'm trying to buy. There has to be a consideration that's given here. Actually, the whole object of the thing is to create a *point in time* when the title is transferred. Something has to be *done*. In this case, you took off the guy's sandal and gave it the other one. And that did it.

Ruth 4

NIV

⁸ So the guardian-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it yourself." And he removed his sandal.

⁹ Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelek, Kilion and Mahlon.

¹⁰ I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from his hometown. Today you are witnesses!"

¹¹ Then the elders and all the people at the gate said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the family of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem."

And, indeed, he is.

Ruth 4

NIV

¹² "Through the offspring the LORD gives you by this young woman, may your family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah."

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.

¹⁴ The women [*I guess, the circle of friends of Naomi*] said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel!

¹⁵ He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth."

You know, these words fall strangely on our ear, but when you take a moment to think about them, it's *beautiful*. It's a wonderful thing that God has renewed your life and will sustain you in your old age, for your daughter-in-law who *loves you*—isn't that marvelous—and who is better to you than seven sons has given him birth.

Ruth 4

NIV

¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him.

Oh, those grandchildren. Aren't they special?

Ruth 4

NIV

¹⁷ The women living there said, "Naomi has a son!" And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

¹⁸ This, then, is the family line of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron,

¹⁹ Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab,

²⁰ Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon,

²¹ Salmon the father of Boaz, Boaz the father of Obed,

²² Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David.

And, you know, this seems to be why the Book of Ruth is important—for Ruth stands in the line of the Messiah, and she was *not* an Israelite by birth. Now, I think this is really fascinating, and here is your discussion question: What is the importance of a grandmother of the Messiah to have been a non-Israelite? Interesting question, no? Let me know what you think.

Okay, that's the Book of Ruth. It's a wonderful love story. I enjoy it immensely, every time I read it. Now, we'll look toward next week when, God willing, we'll start the Book of Deuteronomy. So, until then, be sure to get in touch; let me know what you think; ask your questions to me—ron@borntowin.net.

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