

# THE OUTSIDER

EQUIP21 TEENS STUDIES

## HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THESE STUDIES

- go check out Avril's Top Tips on Reading Ruth
- read the whole book of Ruth before doing each study (it's only 87 verses!)
- grab your favourite stationery
- underline, highlight and write all over the manuscript (download it on the EQUIP website)

### *Inside the studies*

I hope you are ready to dig into the book of Ruth! These studies follow three major themes across the book.

- Study 1 - God's judgement and provision (Naomi)
- Study 2 - God's *hesed* (faithful love) (Ruth)
- Study 3 - God's redeemer (Boaz)

### *The book of Ruth*

Ruth is a beautiful part of God's word that has so much to say to us as young women today. As Christians, we can read the book of Ruth to learn (NOT about dating!) but about God's judgment and provision, God's faithful love and God as our redeemer.

Also, a bit of a spoiler, Ruth and Boaz are King David's great grandparents and Jesus' great, great, great, great etc. grandparents! This means God's acts of redeeming in Ruth are not just for Ruth and Naomi, but part of God's redemption for all his people for all time! For in Jesus, we see the ultimate example of God's judgment, provision, and faithful love as our redeemer.



## Background

You can also check out Carmelina's video on *Ruth in Context*.

Ruth lived during a pretty dark part of Israel's history, the time of the Judges. Repeated over and over is the line,

*"In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did whatever he wanted."*  
– Judges 17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25

While doing whatever you want may sound great, in reality, it was a time of violence, selfishness and ungodliness as the nation of Israel disobeyed their loving God. Even the judges that God chose to get Israel back on track had problems! However, in this dark time, the characters in the book of Ruth stand out as vastly different.

### REMEMBER

Ruth is one small part of one big story about Jesus...not about us. So when we read Ruth we need to look at what it is telling us about God and then about Jesus. We might find that it points us to how God judges sin and shows his extravagant kindness and mercy.



# Study 1 – God's judgement and provision

## NAOMI

Brainstorm what you know about the time of the Judges!

*Tip: Read Judges 2:10-23.*

1. Read Ruth 1:1-5.

a) What do we learn about Naomi's family in these verses?

### DID YOU KNOW?

Israel has a problematic relationship with the nation of Moab throughout their history, with their sin stretching all the way back to Lot's incestuous relationship with his daughter (Gen 19:30-18). Going to Moab was a bad move! *Read more in Num. 20, 22 & 25; Judges 11.*

b) Why is this situation particularly hard for Naomi?

2. Read Ruth 1:6-22

a) What signs of God's judgement do we see in these verses?

b) What signs of God's provision do we also see in this section?

OPTIONAL EXTRA!

Go through chapters 2-4 of Ruth and highlight in two different colours ALL the other places you can see the LORD's judgement and provision for Naomi.

4. Naomi uses the name the LORD (or Almighty) many times. What does this teach us about her understanding of God amidst her differing life situations?

Ruth 1:8-9	
Ruth 1:13	
Ruth 1:20-21	

## WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT JESUS

How can we see evidence of God's judgement and provision through Jesus, in the gospels?

*Tip: Read John 1:29 & Hebrews 10:1-14.*

## REFLECT

What are some of the ways you have seen God's provision in your life?

*Tip: A helpful way to think about this is - what things are you thankful for?*

a) the big picture?

b) the small details?

## PRAY

Give thanks for God's judgement and provision and pray about what you have learned.



## Study 2 – God's *hesed* (faithful love)

### RUTH

#### HESED

The book of Ruth uses the incredibly jam-packed word *hesed*. It is so jam-packed that *hesed* cannot be properly captured in one English word!

Psalm 63:3 captures it in the words "*your faithful love is better than life.*"

Professor Daniel Block described it as "the positive attributes of God - love, mercy, grace, kindness, goodness, benevolence, loyalty, covenant faithfulness."

Even though *hesed* is only used three times in the book of Ruth (1:8; 2:20 & 3:10), the action of *hesed* runs throughout the story, especially in the character of Ruth. So, let's zoom in on Ruth and notice the *hesed* that runs through the story.

Share an example of someone who has shown you a compassionate, kind, gracious, other-centred act of love?

## 1. Naomi prays

*She said to them, "Each of you go back to your mother's home. May the LORD show faithful love [hesed] to you as you have shown to the dead and to me." - Ruth 1:8 (HCSB)*

- a) How does Naomi use the word in this verse?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b) What does this teach us about Naomi? What does it teach us about God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c) How is Ruth's response in 1:16-17 an example of *hesed*?

## 2. Naomi praises

*Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by the Lord, who has not forsaken his kindness [hesed] to the living or the dead." Naomi continued, "The man is a close relative. He is one of our family redeemers." - Ruth 2:20 (HCSB)*

- a) How does Naomi use the word in this verse?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b) What does this teach us about Boaz? What does it teach us about God?

### 3. Boaz Praises Ruth

*Then he said, "May the Lord bless you, my daughter. You have shown more kindness [hesed] now than before, because you have not pursued younger men, whether rich or poor." - Ruth 3:10 (HCSB)*

a) Why does Boaz use the word *hesed* in this verse?

4. What *hesed* can you see in Ruth 4:15-17?

5. Make a mind map of all the ways you could describe *hesed* in the book of Ruth.

*hesed*





## WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT JESUS

How does Jesus show God's ultimate example of *hesed*?

How do the events in the book of Ruth point us to God's *hesed* in Jesus?

## REFLECT

How do you respond to God's *hesed* towards you in Jesus?

How do we know that God loves us even when we don't always feel it?

How can you show *hesed* to those around you:

- at school?
- with family?
- with friends?
- at church?

## PRAY

Give thanks for God's *hesed* towards us and pray about what you have learned.

## Study 3 - God's redeemer

### BOAZ

Have you ever been in a situation you couldn't get yourself out of?

What do you think the word 'redeem' means? When have you last used it in a regular sense?

1. Read Ruth 2:1.

a) How does the narrator introduce Boaz?

b) Why do you think the narrator mentions these things?

2. What do we learn about Boaz through his words and actions in this chapter?

*Tips: Look also for what we learn about his relationship with God.*

*The verses with \* are the most important.*

	What do we learn about Boaz?
Ruth 2:4	
Ruth 2:8-9	
Ruth 2:11-12*	
Ruth 2:14	
Ruth 2: 15-16	
Ruth 2:19-20*	

3. In Ruth 2:20, Naomi uses the phrase "family redeemer" for the first time. What do you think this means?

*Tip: Go back through Ruth and underline any time you see the word redeem or family redeemer.*

SOME  
BACKGROUND

Check out  
Deuteronomy 25:5-10!

4. Read 3:9 and 2:12. How is Ruth's request similar to what Boaz has prayed for her in Ruth 2:12?

5. What does Boaz need to do to become Ruth and Naomi's family redeemer? (4:5)

6. What do Boaz's actions mean for Ruth and Naomi? How has their situation changed? (4:9-12)

7. Looking at Ruth 4:17-22, even though Boaz wanted to preserve Mahlon's name on his property, whose name does Obed have?

## WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT JESUS

Boaz foreshadows our redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Looking back at Boaz, how are his actions similar to Jesus? How is Jesus an even better redeemer than Boaz?

## REFLECT

What can we learn about redemption from the book of Ruth?

What does it mean to live as God's redeemed people?

*Tip: Check out Ephesians 2:10 & 4:1-3.*

- with family?
- at school?
- with friends?
- at church?

## PRAY

Give thanks that Christ has redeemed us and pray about what you have learned.

