

Preparing to Read Ruth – A Reading Plan

Ruth is rich in allusion to other sections of the Old Testament. You can get ready to read Ruth by using this twenty-day reading plan which will immerse you in the biblical material that the original readers would have been familiar with. We've usually included a question or two to help you focus on some aspect of the passage that is particularly pertinent to Ruth.

- 1 **Genesis 29:31–30:24** What is the character of the two women who become the matriarchs of Israel?
- 2 **Genesis 19:30–38** In what way do Lot's daughters seduce their father? Why?
- 3 **Genesis 38:1–30** Why does Tamar trick her father-in-law? Why might she later be seen as having done an admirable thing?
- 4 **Genesis 45:27–46:4** On what basis does Jacob decide to escape the famine by going down to Egypt?
- 5 **Exodus 6:1–8** This is the first time God presents himself explicitly as the one who redeems. What parallels do you see between verse 7 and Ruth's words in Ruth 1:16?
- 6 **Leviticus 25** What provisions does God make for the poor and to ensure the long-term ownership of land by its original owners?
- 7 **Numbers 27:8–11 & 36:1–12** What happens to land that is sold outside the original family?
- 8 **Deuteronomy 25:5–10** How might the practice of levirate marriage serve a widow's interests?
- 9 **Judges 4:1–24: Deborah & Barak** How does God act and why? Among the major judges, Deborah is the only one the book doesn't criticise. What do you notice about her character?
- 10 **Judges 6:1–40: Gideon** What pattern in Israel's behaviour and God's response do you see?



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- Judges 10:6–11:11
Jephthah 11 Jephthah is God’s man, but how would you describe his character?
- Judges 11:12–40
Jephthah’s daughter 12 How would you describe her character and the plight of women in that culture?
- Judges 13:1–24
Samson 13 Why does God raise up Samson? What do you notice about Samson’s mother’s understanding of God?
- 1 Samuel 1:1–28 14 Hannah and the birth of Samuel. What do we learn about the anguish of infertility here?
- 1 Samuel 16:1–13 15 The anointing of David.
- 1 Samuel 17:20–51 16 David’s first victory. What kind of man is this?
- 2 Samuel 7:1–16 17 David has been crowned king. What does God now promise?
- 2 Samuel 22:1–51 18 The scope of God’s grace to David and the achievements of his reign. Why might the people have admired him so much?
- Psalms 136 19 ‘Love’ here is a translation of the Hebrew word *chesed*. In what ways does God show his *chesed* in the Psalm?
- Proverbs 31:10–31 20 What qualities do you see in this remarkable woman who is given the same high accolade as Ruth – woman of noble character (*chail* in Hebrew)?