

Bible Time Guide

Ruth

Introduction

The Bible is clear that parents are to raise their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4). God's people were commanded long ago to teach God's commands diligently to the next generation (Deut 6:7) so that they remember the faithfulness of God always. Whether you are a father, a single mother, or a grandparent, the Bible Time Guide resource is designed to help you lead children through the Bible intentionally and diligently. We have created this resource to be simple to use so that it's not burdensome, allowing the Word of God to do the heavy lifting while you gain momentum in your home with good, godly disciplines that will hopefully bring favor to generations. So many parents or grandparents want to get into the Word of God more consistently with their children or grandchildren but they don't always know where to start. Our prayer is that this resource provides a "track" to run on, helping you to implement "Bible Time" in your home as a part of fulfilling Ephesians 6:4 and Deuteronomy 6:7.

So, how do you use the Bible Time Guide? The Bible Time Guide is broken up by books of the Bible so that you can go through an entire book of the Bible as a family at your own pace. You simply open up the Bible Time Guide along with your Bible. You then read the Bible passage and follow the question prompts in the guide. You, as the leader, may desire to read the Bible Time Guide for that evening before starting the family discussion to review some of the "Parent's Help" if needed.

We've broken up the questions into three categories so that each time you use it, the children can: 1) Learn the Word 2) Apply the Word 3) Pray the Word. If you can't implement "Bible Time" every night of the week, will this guide still be helpful? Absolutely! The reason we designed this guide to be broken up by books of the Bible is so that you can go at your own

pace. If you can't get to every question for that night's passage, will this guide still be helpful? Absolutely! Every family is different, with children of different ages and maturity presenting different dynamics. You might need to break up one passage over several nights if necessary. And many of the questions have more than one right answer, so be encouraging when your children give good, biblical answers even if they don't exactly match the "Parent's Help" answer that's provided.

We've written this guide to be deep enough for a teenager to engage with, while still simple enough for young children to track with. Feel free to use this guide in a way that suits your family best. Remember, this is just a guide but you are the leader and raising children requires flexibility! Also, each Bible Time Guide starts with an overview of that book of the Bible to help set the context for you as the leader as well as for your family. You may choose to spend a night going through the overview with your family or simply dive into the daily guide.

We hope that this guide will accomplish several things: increase consistency, instruct the next generation, unite your family, grow your faith and minister to your heart as the leader, and glorify God through obedience and discipline as you seek Him in the Scriptures. We are prayerfully anticipating the fruit that will come from your discipline to implement this guide in your home. Be encouraged, lean in, trust the Lord, and be the guide that God has equipped you to be.

The Book of Ruth Overview

The book of Ruth is a glimpse into what life looked like for a group of people during the time of Judges. We know from the book of Judges that the Israelites were “doing what’s right in their own eyes” and therefore committing evil acts. Even with that being true, this book portrays a Gentile woman (Ruth) devoted to loving and obeying the God of Israel. In the book of Judges the nation of Israel turns from God to idols. In the book of Ruth a Moabite woman turns from idols to serve the living God. This story magnifies the goodness and grace of the one true God!

The book of Ruth is a historically true account of the facts surrounding Ruth’s life leading up to her marriage to Boaz. Ruth stays with her Israelite mother-in-law, Naomi, after her husband passes away, showing great care and concern for Naomi and a desire to worship the one true God. A major theme of this book is the miraculous and providential events that lead to God using a Gentile woman to continue the family line of David, which eventually leads to Christ.

It’s possible that Samuel wrote this book, but it seems unlikely and there is no way to be completely sure. It seems to have been written before David since he is mentioned and some believe a date around 1000 B.C. is appropriate.

Ruth 1:1–5

Understand the Word

1. This book starts off by letting us know that life was difficult for everyone. Can you tell why their life was hard?
 - **Parent’s Help:** First, they were living “in the days when the judges ruled.” This means that they lived during the time described in the book of Judges which says “In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (Judges 21:25)” In other words, they lived among a nation of people that were rebelling against God. Second, they lived during a famine. Third, Elimelech, the husband of Naomi and the father of her two sons dies. Fourth, the two sons of Naomi also die.
2. We read that Elimelech was a man of Bethlehem. Where have you heard of that city before?
 - **Parent’s Help:** This is the “City of David” and the place where Mary gave birth to Jesus (See Luke 2:4–7)!
3. Why do you think they were sojourning in the country of Moab? Do you know what sojourning means?
 - **Parent’s Help:** They were most likely traveling to find relief from the famine. Discuss what a famine is and what difficulties would arise from a situation like that. The word “sojourn” means to temporarily stay somewhere and often refers to strangers traveling through somewhere foreign.

Apply the Word

1. What is the nation like where you live? Does it honor God? How can you honor God regardless of where you live?
2. Have you ever experienced losing someone like Naomi and her sons did when Elimelech passed away? How did that make you feel? What should we do when we feel that way?
 - **Parent's Help:** As we journey through this book we'll see Naomi and Ruth respond to hardship and loss differently. Encourage your children to pay attention to how these women respond to tragedy so that they can learn the correct way to approach God in the midst of pain.

Pray the Word

1. Lord, help us to gain great wisdom and insight by studying the book of Ruth together as a family.
2. Lord, help us to respond to trials with a great trust in You.
3. Lord, help us to honor You even if the nation that we live in does not honor You. Help us to know You through Your Word and live in obedience to Your commands knowing that they are good for us.

Ruth 1:6–18

Understand the Word

1. What do you think it means when we read, “the Lord had visited His people and given them food”?
 - **Parent’s Help:** Naomi was going to go back to Bethlehem because she had heard that the famine had ended!
2. Why did Naomi want her daughters-in-law to return to Moab?
 - **Parent’s Help:** Because Naomi was too old to remarry and still provide sons for Orpah and Ruth to remarry. The text also hints at the fact that she wanted to be alone in her sorrow by expressing self-pity.
3. Why did Ruth ultimately stay with Naomi?
 - **Parent’s Help:** Perhaps part of Ruth’s reasoning came from a desire to love and support her mother-in-law. Though it would appear the primary reason was to serve the one true God! Naomi is so bitter about God’s plan at this point that she actually encourages her daughters-in-law to return to their gods, one of which was probably Chemosh, the main Moabite deity who required child sacrifice. Ruth, instead of returning to her homeland, decided to endure the harder journey with Naomi, trusting in the Lord.

Apply the Word

1. God ended the famine and provided for Bethlehem, which will play a major role in the rest of the story; how have you seen God provide for your family?

2. Have you ever been so upset about something that you just wanted to be alone? Why do you think you want to be alone when you're upset?
3. Ruth wanted to stay with Naomi and follow God no matter what. What decisions can you make this week to do what God says no matter what it costs you?

Pray the Word

1. Lord, help us to be grateful when You provide graciously!
2. Lord, help us to trust You no matter what is happening in our lives. Help us to be a light to others and not get caught up in self-pity.
3. Lord, help us to follow You no matter what. Help us to sacrifice whatever it takes to do what You want us to do!

Ruth 1:19–22

Understand the Word

1. Why do you think that the people of Bethlehem asked, “Is this Naomi?”
 - **Parent’s Help:** Mostly likely because Naomi was riddled with bitterness and it transformed her personal appearance.
2. Naomi is choosing to be bitter because of the difficult situation she’s in but does Naomi have a very good attitude towards God?
 - **Parent’s Help:** She goes so far as to ask to be called “Mara.” She is directly referring to the passage in Exodus 15:33 which says, “When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah.”
3. Based on Naomi’s reasoning for being bitter, doesn’t Ruth have the same right to be angry?
 - **Parent’s Help:** Ruth has just lost her husband, father-in-law, and brother-in-law as well. She also lost a sister-in-law because she traveled back to Moab and her mother-in-law was not acting like herself. So, although Ruth had also experienced deep suffering, she was trusting in God!

Apply the Word

1. Have you ever been so mad that everyone around you can tell that something is wrong? How can you show self-control with your face and with your body even when things don’t go your way?

2. Can someone explain what bitterness is? How can you avoid becoming bitter over time?
3. Can someone explain why no one has the “right” to be bitter?
 - **Parent’s Help:** Help your kids identify what they can be grateful for, even if they are currently going through a trial. Or you can use past trials to show how God worked through them, helping everyone to trust in a current or future trial.

Pray the Word

1. Lord, help us to not stew in our anger and sin against You in this way.
2. Lord, help us to focus on the blessings that You have provided, even in the midst of our suffering, so that we can be grateful and not grow bitter.
3. Lord, help us to trust You in the midst of trials, knowing that You are sovereign and good!

Ruth 2:1–13

Understand the Word

1. Ruth said, “Let me go to the field and glean,” when talking to Naomi. What does it mean to glean?
 - **Parent’s Help:** Gleanings were grain that was left after the first cutting of the harvest. These “leftovers” were dedicated to those in need, specifically widows and orphans. The Mosaic law stated that the harvest should not be reaped to the corners of the field and that the gleanings shouldn’t be picked up, leaving them for the needy (Lev 19:9).
2. Why do you think Ruth is so grateful for Boaz’s kindness?
 - **Parent’s Help:** Ruth seems consistently mindful that she is a foreigner and perhaps she’s familiar with passages like Deuteronomy 23:3, which says:

3 “No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the LORD. Even to the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of the LORD forever.”

Boaz offers her protection and goes beyond the basic requirements for hospitality, which we will see more of in the next section.

Apply the Word

1. If you were in Ruth’s position, how would it make you feel to be treated with such kindness and care from Boaz?

- **Parent's Help:** It's important to know that Boaz didn't expect to redeem Ruth at this point, so he wasn't serving her just to earn favor. We will see later (v. 3:10) that he was surprised by her pursuit of him, partly because he was older than she was.
2. Has someone ever treated you better than you deserved? If so, who was it, what did they do, and how did it make you feel?
 3. Who can you serve this week even if you haven't been asked to? How will you do this?

Pray the Word

1. Lord, help us to serve others beyond what is our duty and more than they deserve.
2. Lord, help us to be grateful for those who serve us even when we aren't worthy of such honor and care.
3. Lord, help us to trust You to provide for our greatest needs.

Ruth 2:14–23

Understand the Word

1. Can you name the various ways that Boaz went above and beyond to show Ruth grace while she harvested?
 - **Parent's Help:** He gave her bread to dip in the wine, roasted grain, gleanings from among the sheaves, and extra grain from the bundles.
2. We read that when Ruth beat out what she had gleaned she had about an ephah of barley. How much grain do you think that is?
 - **Parent's Help:** It's about half a bushel or 30–40 pounds! Naomi's response indicates that this was a generous haul.
3. In verse 20, Naomi says to Ruth about Boaz, "The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers." What do you think it means that Boaz is a redeemer?
 - **Parent's Help:** The concept of a kinsman–redeemer is found in the Levitical law. A close relative could redeem a family member who had been sold into slavery (Lev 25:47–49), they could redeem land that needed to be sold under difficult financial hardship (Lev 25:23–28), and they could redeem the family name via levirate marriage (Deut 25:5–10). As we'll see later in the story Boaz can and will redeem both the land and Ruth.

Apply the Word

1. Boaz seems to be the type of person who serves others without expecting anything in return. When was the last time you did that? How did it make you feel afterward?

2. We read that Boaz is a redeemer. Who is our ultimate redeemer? Why do we all need a redeemer?
 - **Parent's Help:** Jesus is the ultimate redeemer! We all need a redeemer because we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23).
3. Explain the gospel and how we must respond to it. Can you think of any Scriptures that help to explain the gospel?
 - **Parent's Help:** The gospel is the good news that Jesus lived a perfect sinless life (2 Cor 5:21) so that He could be the perfect sacrifice upon the cross to die for the sins of those He came to save (1 Cor 15:3-4; John 3:16-17). He then rose again (1 Cor 15:20), defeating death! We must repent (Acts 26:20), turning from our desire to sin and live for ourselves, and turn to Christ, putting our full trust in Him (Eph 2:8-10), doing what He says from now on.

Pray the Word

1. Lord, help us to serve others without expecting anything in return.
2. Lord, help us all to understand and respond to the gospel.
3. Pray for those who are lost in your own or extended family.

Ruth 3:1–18

Understand the Word

1. In verse 4 Naomi says, “But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he will tell you what to do.” Why is Naomi asking Ruth to do this strange thing?
 - **Parent’s Help:** This ritual is an ancient Near Eastern custom. Boaz is probably a whole generation older than Ruth. Since Boaz is a very respectful man he would not have initiated a marriage proposal with such a younger woman. This ritual is Ruth’s way of letting Boaz know that she desires to marry Him.
2. In verse 12, Boaz says, “And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I.” Why is Boaz wanting to talk to this other person first and not marry Ruth right away?
 - **Parent’s Help:** Boaz loved the Lord and wanted to do what was right. There was a relative that was closer in relationship to Elimelech and therefore was the person who had the first right to redeem Ruth. This other redeemer may have been Boaz’s older brother or perhaps a cousin.

Apply the Word

1. Parents, explain how your marriage proposal happened. Use this as an opportunity to praise God for your marriage and how God providentially brought the two of you together for His glory.

2. Even though Boaz was excited about Ruth approaching him for redemption through marriage, he took the time to do the right thing. Was there a time in your life when you were excited for something but had to wait and be patient? How can you grow to be more patient like Boaz?
3. Boaz wouldn't have proposed to Ruth because it was considered inappropriate to do so in that culture. Are there times that you have to deny yourself something just because it's the right thing to do?

Pray the Word

1. Pray for the future marriages of your children; that they will be foremost for God's glory.
2. Lord, help us to be patient even when we want something really badly. Help us to trust You as we wait for Your timing.
3. Lord, help us to deny ourselves and do things the right way, even if that means losing out on something.

Ruth 4:1–12

Understand the Word

1. Why did Boaz go to the gate to take care of this business?
 - **Parent's Help:** This was the place where business transactions would be done in ancient times.
2. In verse 6, the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it." What do you think he means by this?
 - **Parent's Help:** He didn't want the family assets to be divided among his existing children and any future children that would come from a marriage with Ruth.
3. Why did these guys take off their sandals to finalize the "deal"?
 - **Parent's Help:** This was a tradition used to finalize a deal in front of witnesses. Today we use a signature in the same way.

Apply the Word

1. Boaz went through all of the right steps to make sure that his duty as redeemer was done correctly. What are some things in your home (chores, schoolwork, etc.) that your parents want you to do a certain way? Even if you don't like the way they want things done, why is it important to do it the way they desire?
2. The men at the gate made an agreement with each other. Why is it so important to stick to our agreements? Is there anything you've agreed to do that is hard to stick to?

Pray the Word

1. Lord, help us to be people who do the right things in the right way no matter how we feel.
2. Lord, help us to stick to our agreements and be people of integrity so that our life can be a witness to Your perfect faithfulness.

Ruth 4:13–22

Understand the Word

1. If Obed was the son of Ruth, then what was Ruth's relationship to David?
 - **Parent's Help:** Ruth was David's great grandmother!
2. If David was in the lineage of Ruth then who else is in the lineage of Ruth?
 - **Parent's Help:** Jesus Christ!

Apply the Word

1. God has weaved together an incredible story that resulted in the line of Christ being preserved! How have you seen God weave several things together in your life to bring about His great plan?
 - **Parent's Help:** You may have more stories to share regarding this question than your children do. Perhaps this is a great time to share stories your children might not even be aware of!
2. What was your favorite thing about the book of Ruth? What do you think you'll remember the most about studying this book of the Bible?

Pray the Word

1. Pray for the things that your children identified in question #2 above.
2. Lord, help us to trust that You are weaving together everything about our lives for Your glory and for the good of those who trust Christ (Rom 8:28–29)!

3. Lord, thank You for the book of Ruth. Help us to remember everything that we have studied so that we might love You and trust You more.