



Ruth

**Old
Testament**

β 8th book of the Bible (out of 66)

β 0.27% of the verses in the Bible

β Written in the time of the Monarchy?

Have you watched many romantic comedies (romcoms) at the Pictures or on Television? A lot of people really enjoy them. You watch two people who get together despite possibly insurmountable barriers. The plot can twist and turn, but it often has pathos, warmth, humour (of course) and maybe an occasional song thrown in for good measure. The book of Ruth has all of these qualities - it's the best romcom in the Bible! The main characters are Naomi, Ruth and Boaz.

Whilst Naomi and her family move away from the Promised Land to the neighbouring country of Moab when there is a famine (a picture of Israel herself being faithless), Yahweh remains faithful to Naomi. He brings her back and gives her so much more than she could have expected or even dreamt of. Despair changes to hope. She is transformed.

Facts: Ruth was one of Jesus' direct earthly ancestors. She was also King David's great-grandma through marrying Boaz. A lot of the action occurs in Bethlehem.

God's redeeming plan is even bigger than that. Ruth is not part of the family of God in chapter one, yet God blesses her incredibly as she sticks with her mother-in-law and is touched by the practical love of those who *do* know Him. Joy replaces mourning. Ruth is radically transformed by God too.

Set around 1100BC, it appears much later in the Hebrew Bible, than in the Greek Septuagint which Christians base the Old Testament on. There is only one other book in the Bible that bears the name of a woman.

Aim to read the whole book over the next two weeks.