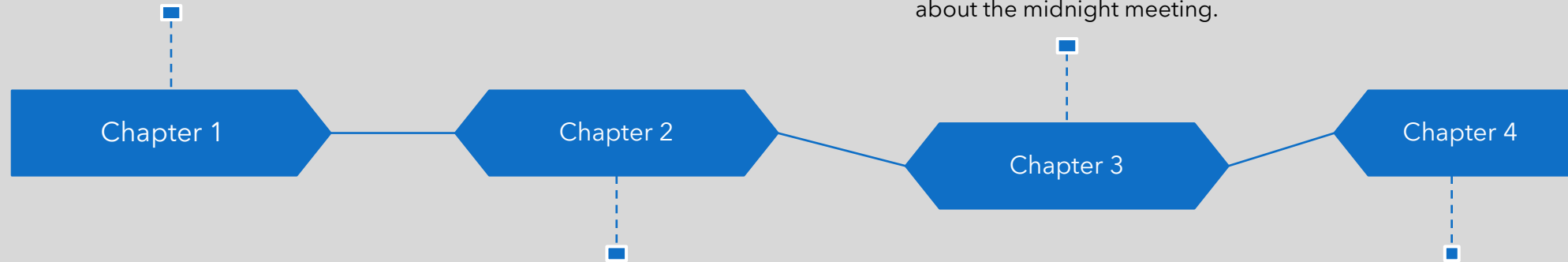


Timeline of Ruth So far

A family moves from Bethlehem to Moab (Famine to Respite.) This is seen by the narrator with a critical eye. After 10 or more years of tragedy, the family moves back from Moab to Bethlehem (From death to hope)... "The arrived at the beginning o the barley harvest."

The women take matters into their own hands. The plan to uncover is presented to Ruth. Boaz reveals to Ruth that the right to redeem belongs to someone else. She spends the night at the threshing floor. Boaz provides for Naomi and promises marriage to Ruth but demands secrecy about the midnight meeting.



Ruth begins to work in the fields during the barley harvest. She meets Boaz who blesses her (Chesed) with special treatment. Naomi Introduces Boaz as a Go'el. Boaz seems to be interested in Ruth, but the chapter ends without a sense of resolution. Ruth goes back to live with her mother-in-law.

The negotiation between the kinsman redeemer and Boaz takes place. The Next of Kin gives up the right of redemption. A Sandal is exchanged. The elders of Bethlehem bless the union between Boaz and Ruth. The book ends with a genealogy from Boaz to King David

AUTHOR AND DATE OF COMPOSITION

The Author is unknown (Early Jewish teachers believed Samuel wrote both Samuel and Ruth. Others believe the author is a woman because of the "softer side of God," and the beautiful themes of fidelity and Chesed. Ruth is "the most positive portrayal of women's relationships in biblical literature" (Jewish Study Bible.) In truth, we don't know who the author of this great short book is, and it is doubtful this author was a woman.

The setting is the time before the monarchy. There are a few theories about the time of composition:

- a. Between the start of King David's reign and the Fall of the Northern Kingdom (950-722 B.C.E) This is the "Origin Story" theory.
- b. An early treaty meant to counter Deuteronomy 23:3
- c. During the exilic period (586-500 B. C. E. as a powerful motivation piece to encourage the exiles to return home after the exile.)
- d. After 500 B.C.E. as a powerful argument (and minority opinion) against Ezra 10:1-44 and Nehemiah 13: 23-31

Opening Prayer

Dear Lord,

We give you thanks for giving us the freedom, time, and resources to engage in this long-term study of the book of Ruth. We thank for blessing our time together and for speaking to us through this great narrative. Continue to bless us during this coming time of rest and continue to lead us through your Holy Word. In Jesus name we pray. Amen!

Almighty God our heavenly Father, graciously comfort your servant Allen in his suffering, and bless the means made use of for his cure. Fill his heart with confidence that, though at times he may be afraid, he yet may put his trust in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



THE STORY OF DAVID:

King of Israel

The Lord made her conceive...

Exodus 13:2 and 13:12

Genesis 18:10-14

Genesis 21:1

Genesis 30:22

Judges 13:3-5

1 Samuel 2;21

Isaiah 66:9

Psalms 113:9

2 Kings 4:13-16

1 Samuel 1: 11, 17

1 Samuel 2:5

The motif of barrenness highlights the unique destiny of the promised son. Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Samson, Samuel, Shunammite's boy (Elisha,)

These narratives suggest that God who opens the womb, has the right to demand the life that emerges from it. (Rachel Adelman at JWA Encyclopedia)

Numerology at the service of theological Narrative

Perhaps the omission of centuries worth of descendants point to a theological point that lies beyond the narrative. Remember that genealogies only highlight the descendants who have distinguished themselves or have been used by God to advance the nation's history (Salvation history.)

“The whole chain from Perez to David consists of ten links, five of which (from Perez to Nahshon) belong to the 430 years of the sojourn in Egypt, and five (from Salmon to David) to the 476 years between the exodus from Egypt and the death of David.

This symmetrical division is apparently as intentional as the limitation of the whole genealogy to ten members, for the purpose of stamping upon it through the number ten as the seal of completeness the character of a perfect, concluded, and symmetrical whole.” (Keil and Delitzsch Biblical Commentary.)

Closing Prayer
