

EXPECT THE

Unexpected

THE BOOK OF RUTH

BETH DEFAZIO | 5 SESSIONS

**NEXT
LEVEL**  **ONLINE**
OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Expect the Unexpected | Session 1: Introduction

A NextLevel Video Series on the Book of Ruth

With Beth DeFazio

STUDY...

EXPECTED	UNEXPECTED
>Ruth is a book of History.	>In the Hebrew Scriptures Ruth is a part of the <i>Ketuvim</i> – the biblical texts that include _____ and _____.
>Ruth serves as a bridge between the books of _____ and _____, and the eras of the _____ and the _____.	>Ruth is found after the book of _____ and has a poetic nature as it follows a chiastic structure. A B C C B A
>Themes in Ruth: _____ _____ _____	>Also themes in Ruth: _____ _____ _____
>This story is all about the woman _____.	>This story might be more about the woman _____.
>This story is a fairy tale.	>This story is an epic.

DISCUSS...

1. Share some of your creature comforts—things that you just keep coming back to time and time again (meals, movies, books, etc.).
2. Coming into this study, what did you already know (or think you knew) about the story of Ruth? In what ways has it been comforting?
3. Looking back over your study notes, discuss some of the unexpected elements. What impact does this new information have on you as you move forward in this study?
4. Take time right now, individually or as a group, to read through the entire book of Ruth.
5. Pray for the Spirit to provide understanding throughout this study. Ask for the Lord to speak important truths into your life, however unexpected they might be.

Expect the Unexpected | Session 2: Grief

A NextLevel Video Series on the Book of Ruth

With Beth DeFazio

STUDY...

What's in a name?

Elimilech –

Mahlon & Kilion –

Naomi –

Ruth –

Orpah –

The fate of the widow...

Lessons in Hebrew:

- *Shuv*: Translation – _____; Usage – _____ x in Ruth 1;
Denotes physical and _____ turning.
- *Mara*: Translation – _____; Name given to Naomi by _____.

The fate of THIS widow...

The Naomi and Job connection...

The Mara and Exodus connection...

DISCUSS...

1. Consider this line from today's teaching: "If we skip over the gravity of grief, we miss the impact of the glory of God." Share a time in your life when God's glory was revealed even in the midst of your grief.
2. Review the list of Naomi's losses. Which part(s) do you find particularly difficult to fathom? Are there any of her grievances that you had not considered before? How does this change the way you see Naomi and her story?
3. Listen to this statement again: "As much as faith may desire an answer, it cannot be dependent upon one." Explain what this means about faith in general. Now share what this means to you in your specific faith journey.

4. Discuss some people, places, positions, possessions, etc. in which you have mistakenly placed your hope in the past. What does it mean to you today to declare, "My hope is in the resurrection of Jesus Christ"?
5. Pray and thank God for the truth of 2 Corinthians 4.17. But as you pray these words, add in the specific troubles that you are facing today. Remind yourself and each other that his eternal glory far outweighs them all.

Expect the Unexpected | Session 3: Covenant

A NextLevel Video Series on the Book of Ruth

With Beth DeFazio

STUDY...

While Naomi's losses are clearly articulated, Ruth has experienced loss of her own...

Ruth's vow in 1.16 isn't to give herself a future, but a covenant to provide for _____.

Understanding the harvest:

- Harvesters –
- Reapers –
- Gleaners –

Deuteronomy 24 & 28 call the Israelites to make accommodations for the _____, the _____, and the _____.

Enter Boaz...

- Description:
- First words:
- Interactions with Ruth – He empowers her, he _____ for her, and he _____ her.

Chapter two ends quite counter culturally...

Because of Ruth's covenant care for _____, she receives covenant care from _____.

DISCUSS...

1. Share the most significant promise anyone has made to you. What did that promise cost the person? And how did that covenant enhance your relationship?
2. In this Old Testament text we see the gospel clearly as both Ruth and Naomi prioritize the other woman's future before their own. Discuss your own experience of seeing Jesus' sacrificial example displayed by people in your own story.
3. In today's study we see Ruth challenge Boaz to move beyond the letter of the law to the spirit of the law. Share an example from your own discipleship where you have been following the letter of the law. What would it look like to follow the spirit of the law?

4. There is a theme of contrast in Ruth chapter two. We see empty to full, seedless to fruitful, curses to blessing, and more. Describe a contrast from your own life – a time when the future looked dim...but then God...
5. Pray and offer thanksgiving to God. Thank him for his gifts of empowerment, provision, and protection in your life.

Expect the Unexpected | Session 4: Love

A NextLevel Video Series on the Book of Ruth

With Beth DeFazio

STUDY...

Lessons in Hebrew:

- *Hesed*: Translation – _____; Usage – ____x in Ruth.
- *Go'el*: Translation – _____; Explained in Leviticus 25 & Deuteronomy 25.

Naomi's instructions...

- Arrival...
- Attire...
- Approach...
- Action...

Ruth's proposal:

- "corner of your garment"...
- "guardian redeemer"...

Boaz's response:

- "noble character"...
- Another *go'el*...

DISCUSS...

1. Share the funniest or most ridiculous quotes you've heard regarding love.
2. Read Psalm 103 in its entirety. Now read verse eight again. The word "love" is the word *hesed*. Discuss the definition of *hesed* that was shared in the study and then find examples of God doing *hesed* in this Psalm.
3. Revisit the acts of *hesed* seen so far in the book of Ruth. Recognize the sacrificial love offered from Naomi to Ruth, from Ruth to Naomi, and from Boaz to both women. How has God done *hesed* in your life?
4. Share other favorite verses, songs, or biblical stories that demonstrate the kind, loyal, merciful, and unfailing love of God.

5. Pray for your eyes and hearts to be opened to the needs of those around you. Ask God to create in you a spirit of *hesed*—one that is compassionate and readily sacrificial for the benefit of others.

Expect the Unexpected | Session 5: Redemption

A NextLevel Video Series on the Book of Ruth

With Beth DeFazio

STUDY...

Parallels from Proverbs 31 and the book of Ruth...

Lessons in Hebrew:

- *Ga'al* (root of *go'el*): Translation – Redeem; Usage – ____x in Ruth. Definition – _____.

Land ownership as a guardian redeemer...

- Pros:
- Cons:

Boaz's declaration...

- It's Elimilech's land, but Boaz also honors _____.
- He acknowledges not just Ruth, but her Moabite lineage as well.
- Boaz makes it abundantly clear that this redemption is for _____ family line, not his own.

The honor of an heir...

- Obed is declared _____ son.
- The Levirate Law has been fulfilled.
- Ruth is deemed worth more than _____ sons.

A closing genealogy:

- Begins with _____...
- _____ comes in at number seven...
- Wraps up with _____...

DISCUSS...

1. Look up Proverbs 31. Share a word or phrase that is unmistakably "Ruth" in your eyes.
2. Boaz takes on great responsibility in becoming guardian-redeemer of Naomi's family. Share a story from your life, or that of another, in which great love led to great sacrifice.
3. Look back at the rejoicing in verses 11-12 and 14-15. Which of the blessings proclaimed impacts you the most and why?

4. Think through the gospel message shared in these four session titles: Grief, Covenant, Love, Redemption. Articulate your own salvation story in just a few sentences with these themes as your guide.
5. "Every book reveals his blood, every story his sacrifice." Share your favorite Old Testament story and how it reveals Jesus to you. End in prayer thanking God for these reminders of his unexpected love.

This video was made possible with support from:

