

## GOD'S CALLING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

### Lesson Twenty

#### GOD CALLED RUTH THE MOABITNESS

(Ruth 1-4)

#### Burden to Impart:

*In this lesson we see how God called Ruth, a foreigner of the Gentile, idol-worshipping country of Moab. Although Ruth had no place among God's people by birth because she was not a Jew, yet because she had a heart that sought after God and cleaved unto God's people, she was not only accepted into the congregation of God's people, she was blessed by God. She married a compassionate, wealthy, and honorable kinsman named Boaz and had a son who was later the grandfather of the great king of Israel, David. Eventually, she even became an ancestor of Christ.*

**Memory Verse:** "But Ruth said, wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God"  
(Ruth 1:16).

#### Facts to Teach:

1. Joshua and Caleb led the Israelites into the good land which God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They destroyed the enemies and settled down. But after a while the Israelites no longer followed the Lord or obeyed His commandments. Instead, they did whatever they wanted to, whatever seemed "right in their own eyes."

2. When God's people obeyed His commandments and followed Him He blessed them (Deut. 28:1-8); when they forsook Him He sometimes held back the rain, which then resulted in famine. This was so they would turn back to Him and repent of their sins.

3. During a famine in the good land, a certain man (Elimelech) took his family (his wife Naomi and two sons) and left to the country of the Moabites. This was a wrong thing to do. He should have remained in the land of Israel and returned to the Lord, along with all the people, in order to regain the Lord's blessing. Instead, he took his family to a country that didn't believe in the Lord, but rather worshipped idols.

4. Once in Moab, Elimelech died. His two sons soon disobeyed God's commandment and married two women who were not children of Israel; they were idol-worshippers. They stayed in Moab for about ten years, then both sons died also.

5. By this time Israel had repented and returned to the Lord, so the famine was over. Naomi decided to return to the land of Israel. Her two daughters-in-law cried and wanted to

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### Lesson Twenty (Continued)

go with her. She said that they should not; they should stay in their own land with their own people. The one wept, kissed her good-bye, and stayed in Moab. The other, Ruth, would not leave her; she was determined to stay with Naomi, Naomi's people, and Naomi's God for the rest of her life. When Naomi saw that Ruth would not be persuaded, she allowed her to return with her to the land of God's people.

6. Naomi and Ruth were very poor when they returned to the good land, and neither one had a husband to work, for they were both widows. When the harvest time came Ruth gleaned in the fields after the reapers, picking up the grain that fell to the ground. She worked very long and hard hours. She was a diligent and virtuous woman. All of the people around learned how she had left her father, mother, and homeland to come to the country of God's people, had put her trust in the Lord, loved Naomi, and took care of her (Ruth 2:11-12; 3:11).

7. One day while gleaning in the field, Ruth met the owner of the field. He was a very honorable and wealthy man named Boaz. Ruth found out that night from Naomi that Boaz was a relative of her deceased husband, Elimelech.

8. According to God's law the nearest relative of the widow's husband should marry her, take care of her, and raise up children to her so that she would not lose the family's inheritance, the land of her husband.

9. Naomi's nearest relative (kinsman) refused to get involved with helping Naomi to keep her land of inheritance, because he would have to marry Naomi's widowed daughter-in-law, Ruth, who was a Moabitess.

10. Boaz, however, was more honorable. He not only paid the price to redeem Naomi's land of inheritance so she would not lose it, he married Ruth, a woman who was a foreigner, from the despised country of Moab.

11. God blessed this dear couple, unselfish, compassionate Boaz and virtuous Ruth, and they had a son. Their son was the grandfather of the greatest king Israel ever had until the birth of Christ, King David. The very greatest King, Christ, was born many years later and was a descendant of David and also of Ruth.

*[This lesson may be divided into two parts as follows: points 1-5 as one lesson and points 6-11 as another.]*