

# Beauty in the Gates

“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies...  
...Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain:  
but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.”

(Proverbs 31:10 and 30))

“And now, my daughter, fear not;  
I will do to thee all that thou requirest:  
for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.”

(Ruth 3:11)

The story of Ruth is a beautiful story of love and redemption. Ruth is the **one** woman in the Bible that is identified as a **virtuous** woman.

Boaz says in Ruth 3:11, “...for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.” The word that Boaz used to describe Ruth is the same word that is used in Proverbs 31 to describe the virtuous woman that every man should seek.

This same word is also used to describe brave and strong men of character, “mighty men of valor.” Ruth could be called a “mighty woman of valor,” and like the Proverbs 31 mighty woman of valor, she was praised in the gates. The people of the city knew that she was a virtuous woman. They knew from her **actions**.

1. Read the book of Ruth several times. If you desire, read the book in different translations each time. Write a brief summary of the story in the space below.

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2. Read the story one more time and list on the next pages all of Ruth’s actions. What did she do? (For example, Chapter 1, verse 7 says that Ruth traveled with Naomi and Orpah to return to Judah.) Be sure to also note what other people say about her.



Ruth's actions (continued):

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3. What did the people of Bethlehem know about Ruth?

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4. Do you see any basic characteristics of Ruth demonstrated in her actions? What was she like?

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5. Read Proverbs 31:10-31 below. Review the list of actions that you recorded while reading the story of Ruth. Ruth's actions and words demonstrated the virtuous character that people recognized in her. As you read the Proverbs passage one more time, write down Ruth's actions and words next to the verses that describe similar actions and attitudes in the virtuous woman.

10 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.

11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

13 She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

14 She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.

15 She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

16 She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

17 She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

18 She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.

19 She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

20 She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.

22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.

23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

24 She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

25 Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

29 Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

30 Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

6. Read Ruth 1:16. Remember Ruth was a Moabite woman. She lived in a land of idol worshippers. She tells Naomi, "Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God." What is she declaring when she says this?

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7. Read Ruth 4:17. How is Ruth related to King David?

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8. Reread Proverbs 31:30-31

30 Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

9. How does the life of Ruth demonstrate this truth from Scripture?

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10. Are you known by your works? Can others tell, by your actions, that you fear God?

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11. What traits in Ruth's character are ones that you should emulate?

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12. **For Girls:** List specific actions that you, with God's help, will take to build the same character traits in your own life.

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**For Boys:** Reread the entire book of Ruth, noting Boaz's words and actions. What can you learn from his example?

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**For further study:**

Use a concordance to help you study "the fear of the Lord." What promises are associated with fearing God? What actions demonstrate one's fear of the Lord? After you organize your findings, review Ruth's life again. How is her fear for God demonstrated in the book of Ruth? How is it demonstrated in your life?

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by Pam Forster

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