Close Bible Study Ruth

> by Mary Kane www.onlybyprayer.com

Close Reading is a method of reading which became popular in the United States during the New Criticism Movement of the 1930's-1970's. Though dating back to the Roman rhetorician Quintilion, Close Reading method is still widely used in classrooms today. Repeated readings and disciplined analysis of the text provided by the Close Reading method, greatly impact the comprehension of the reader. I pray you will be greatly blessed as you use this method of study during your Quiet Time with God.

Below is a chart containing our Close Bible Study symbols and instructions. Please print this sheet and laminate it. Keep it handy as we will use it throughout our study time.

Close Bible Symbols and Instructions		
$\Diamond$	Put a star next to key concepts.	
	Circle important words	
	Underline important phrases	
	Put a box around repeated words or theme words	
<b>†</b>	Draw a cross next to something new you have learned.	
?	Put a question mark by what you don't understand & ask God to give you wisdom	
VS, VW,	VS: verse to self connection VW: verse to world connection	
	Draw a heart by God's main message to you today.	
In the <b>left margin</b> , note God's Word to you. In the <b>right margin</b> , note your response.		



My Response

Before we begin our study time today, please go to God in prayer and ask Him to clean your heart of all unrighteousness and open the eyes of your heart to the truth of His Word. Now, please read Ruth chapter 1, all the way through.

God's Word

- 1 Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons.
- 2 The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there.
- 3 Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons.
- 4 Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years.
- 5 Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.
- 6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread.
- 7 Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.

God's Word 8 And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each My Reponse to her mother's house. The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me.

9 The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband."

So she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

10 And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people."

11 But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

12 Turn back, my daughters, go—for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons,

13 would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!"

14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

15 And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."

God's Word

But Ruth said,

<u>My</u> <u>Response</u>

"Entreat me not to leave you,
Or to turn back from following after you;
For wherever you go, I will go;
And wherever you lodge, I will lodge;
Your people shall be my people,
And your God, my God.

17 Where you die, I will die,
And there will I be buried.
The LORD do so to me, and more also,
If anything but death parts you and me."

- 18 When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her.
- 19 Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?"
- 20 But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.
- 21 I went out full, and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?"
- 22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-inlaw with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

As mentioned in the preview information at the beginning of our study, the repeated readings and structured analysis of the Close Reading Method greatly increases the comprhension of the text by the reader. Using our Close Bible Symbols and Instructions card, we will go through Ruth 1 several times with open hearts waiting to receive what the Lord has prepared for us to learn today.

Read though chapter 1 again and put a star by key concepts. For instance, I would put a star by the phrase "famine in the land." After you have finished starring key concepts, please record them in the chart provided:

Key Concepts	Why they are Important

Read through chapter 1 again. This time, circle important words. Please write your important words in the chart below. To greatly increase our understanding of the God's Word, we will research the meanings of your important words in the original language. (I cannot overstate the importance of this step. It is crucial to your learning.) Please click the following link to learn how to use the interlinear/C button at Blue Letter Bible: http://blb.sc/0005za

Important Words	Definitions

Now, please reread chapter 1 and underline significant phrases. (For example, I would underline the phrase, "... the Lord visited His people by giving them bread." Then, I'd recall other places in the Bible in which bread is significant. Why bread? Jesus is the Bread of Life, God gave His people Bread from heaven in the desert, etc.)

Next, scan chapter one and put a box around repeated words/theme words and their synonyms. To go deeper, look up your repeated/theme words and their synonyms at Blue Letter Bible. The work will be well-worth the blessing you will receive from God.

5 Please follow the same procedure for the cross and question mark symbols.

Go through the text again and place a "VS" next to a verse for which you personally connect. For example, a person might mark VS (verse-to-self connection) by verse 7 because they had moved away from their homwtown and then moved back. Also, a person may mark a "VW" (verse-to-world connection) by verse 1 due to hearing about a famine in another part of the world.

Finally, read Ruth 1 again and mark in the margins God's specific word to you and what you need to do in response to what He has said.



## Other Tips for Close Reading:

- 1. Look for opposite concepts (light/dark) throughout the text.
- 2. Note how a chapter opens and closes.
- 3. Pay attention to names of people and places. Look up their meanings at Blue Letter Bible.

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Write a summary of what you have learned today. Please do not skip this important last step. Research proves the writing process makes permanent what we have learned through reading.

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Thank you for joining me today for Bible study. I pray that you enjoyed and were greatly blessed by the Close Bible Study method.

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"Ruth 1 (New King James Version)." Blue Letter Bible. Sowing Circle. Web. 22 Feb, 2015. <a href="http://www.blueletterbible.org/Bible.cfm?b=Rth&c=1&p=0&rl=0&t=NKJV">http://www.blueletterbible.org/Bible.cfm?b=Rth&c=1&p=0&rl=0&t=NKJV</a>.