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Numerical Features of the Book of Ruth

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Numerical Features of the Book of Ruth

A New Approach to its Structural Design

Please read the General Introduction

Detailed outline based on content and numerical features

The story of Ruth is a finely crafted numerical work of art, which is composed of 12 scenes in the story as such (1,1-4,17), and an Epilogue, the genealogy of Perez (4,18-22). I shall adduce evidence to show that the Epilogue, which is demarcated by the only **P**etuchah in the book, is structurally part and parcel of the story. That the book as a whole is a cohesive unity is demonstrated by its **85** (5x17) verses and **1296** words by which it has been finalized and sealed as I shall show further below.

Strikingly, the number **1296** is a multiple of **48**, the numerical value of the name Ruth (20+6+22=**48**).

It is therefore not surprising to find that Scene 4 (2,1-7), the crucial passage in which Ruth takes action to seek a benefactor, is made up of **96** (2x**48**) words. Moreover, Scene 10, in which Boaz takes steps to redeem Naomi's land (4,1-6) has **106** words, which is a multiple of **53**, the numerical value of the name Naomi (14+16+13+10=**53**). For the numerical value of the name Boaz (**25**) see Observation 5 below.

Scenes 1 (1,1-7) with **104** (4x**26**) words, Scene 2 (1,8-14) with **102** (6x**17**) words, Scene 3 (1,15-22) with **119** (7x**17**) words, and Scene 5 (2,8-14) with **136** (5x**26**) words, are all sealed by multiples of the numbers **26** and **17** in order to express the presence of YHWH in what is described in the text.

Additionally, 37 of the 85 verses (44%) and 949 of the 1296 words (73%) are highlighted by 17 and 26.

The book divides into three clearly defined parts:

- I. The events before Ruth meets Boaz (1,1-3,5): seven scenes arranged in a menorah pattern, with **Scene 4** in pride of place at the centre, Ruth's decision to go and glean after the reapers.
- II. The events after the two met on the threshing floor (3,6-4,17): five scenes, with **Scene 10** in pride of place at the centre, Boaz's actions to redeem Naomi's lap of land.
- III. The Epilogue (4,18-22): the genealogy of Perez.

| Part I The events before Ruth meets Boaz (1,1-3,5): | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Scene 1: Having moved to Moab Naomi decides to return (1,1-7): | 104 (4x 26) words. |
| Scene 2: The decision of Naomi's daughters-in-law (1,8-14): | 102 (6x17) words. |
| Scene 3: Ruth is determined to go with her mother-in-law (1,15-22): | 119 (7x 17) words. |
| Scene 4: Ruth joins the reapers to glean; Boaz hears about her (2,1-7): | 96 (2x48) words. |
| Scene 5: On invitation Ruth gleans in the field of Boaz (2,8-14): | 136 (8x17) words. |
| Scene 6: Ruth tells Naomi about Boaz: he is a relative! (2,15-23): | 146 words. |
| Scene 7: Naomi's strategy for Ruth to meet Boaz (3,1-5): | 66 words. |
| Part II The events after the two met on the threshing floor (3,6-4,17): | |
| Scene 8: Ruth does what Naomi said and Boaz meets her (3,6-13): | 112 words. |
| Scene 9: Boaz gives Ruth barley for her mother-in-law (3,14-18): | 80 words |
| Scene 10: Boaz takes steps to redeem Naomi's land (4,1-6): | 106 words. |
| Scene 11: Boaz performs the rituals and marries Ruth (4,7-12): | 117 words. |
| Scene 12: Ruth gets married, bears a son; the women bless Naomi (4,13-17): | 73 (48+25) words. |
| Part III The genealogy of Perez (4,18-22): | |
| Epilogue: The genealogy of Perez (4,18-22): | 39 words. |

Observation 1 These features are based on two minor corrections in 3,5 and 3,17, where I follow the Qere reading, LXX and a number of Hebrew manuscripts – see BHS and the table below.

Observation 2 The reason why Perez has been chosen as the progenitor of the genealogy, is obviously because the house of Perez is regarded as the model par excellence of a fruitful posterity (4,12). There is absolutely no reason for problemizing this, as some commentators have done. See further Observation 7.

Observation 3 The problematic expression עשה־חיל in 4,11 has nothing to do with the social status of Boaz, as is generally accepted, but concerns his masculine virility, precisely as the context requires: *"Engender procreative power"*. See my article "The Crux in Ruth 4,11", in: ZAW 79 (1967), 364-367.

Twelve different views on the structural design of the book of Ruth

W. RUDOLPH (Das Buch Ruth . Das Hohe Lied . Die Klagelieder, in: KAT XVII 1-3, 1962):

1,1-7a Die Vorgeschichte

1,7b-19a Ruths Entscheidung

1,19b-22 Die Ankunft in Bethlehem

- 2,1-17 Die erste Begegnung zwischen Ruth und Boas
- 2,18-23 Ruth erstattet Bericht
- 3,1-5 Der Plan der Noomi

3,6-15 Die Nachtszene auf der Tenne

- 3,16-18 Ruth erstattet Bericht
- 4,1-12 Die Szene im Tor
- 4,13-17 Ruth wird Mutter
- 4,18-22 Die Genealogie von Perez bis David.
- E. WÜRTHWEIN (Die fünf Megilloth: Ruth, Das Hohelied, Esther, in: HAT 18, 1969, 1-24):
- 1,1-22a Naemis Auszug und Heimkehr:
- 1,1-7a Ein bitteres Los in der Fremde
- 1,7b-19a Dränge mich nicht, dich zu verlassen...
- 1,19b-22a Daheim in Bethlehem
- 1,22b-2,23 Boas, der getreue verwandte:
- 1,22b-2,17 Beim Ährenlesen auf dem Acker des Boas
- 2,18-23 Ruths Bericht tröstet Naemi
- 3,1-18 Boas wird gebeten, Ruth zu "lösen":
- 3,1-5 Naemis Plan
- 3,6-15 Zur Nacht auf der Tenne
- 3,16-18 Wieder bei Naemi
- 4,1-22 Die Lösung:
- 4,1-12 Die Verhandlung im Tor
- 4,13-17 "Naemi is ein Sohn geboren
- 4,18-22 Der Stammbaum des Perez.

G. GERLEMAN (*Ruth . Das Hohelied,* in: BKAT XVIII, 1965): *Outline based on the chapter arrangement.* 1,1-5 Anfang der Geschichte.

1,6-22 Die Heimkehr. 2,1-23 Auf dem Acker des Boas

3,1-18 Auf der Tenne des Boas. 4,1-22 Die Lösung.

E.F. CAMPBELL (Ruth, in: The Anchor Bible, 1975)

- I. A Family of Sojourners (1,1-5)
- II. Returning Home (1,16-22)
- III. Amid Alien Corn (2,1-23)
- IV. The Encounter on the Threshing Floor (3,1-18)
- V. The Resolution at the City Gate (4,1-12)
- VI. "A Son is Born to Naomi" (4,13-17)
- VII. A Genealogical Appendix (4,18-22).
- J.M. SASSON (*Ruth*, The John Hopkins University Press, 1979):
- In Moab (1,1-6)
- The Parting (1,7-14)
- The Pledge (1,15-19a)
- Back to Bethlehem (1,19b-22)
- A Plan (2,1-7) Boaz and Ruth: The First Encounter (2,8-13)
- Boaz Responds (2,14-18a)
- The Report (2,18b-23)
- Naomi's Plan (3,1-5)
- Ruth and Boaz: The Second Encounter (3,6-15) Nothing to Do but Wait (3,16-18)
- Legal Discussions (4,1-12)

The Ancestry of David (4,18-22). R.L. HUBBARD (The Book of Ruth, in: NICOT, 1989): The most detailed outline of the literary structure, "as a simple device which enables the reader to grasp the main sections and flow of thought". I. REPORT: THE STORY OF NAOMI AND RUTH (1,1-4,17) A. NAOMI RETURNS TO BETHLEHEM (1,1-22) 1. Introduction: Tragedy strikes a Bethlehemite Family (1,1-5) a. Report of Migration (1,1-2) b. Report of Double Bereavement (1,3-5) 2. The Return Itself (1,6-22) a. Report of Actions (1,6-21) (1) The Conversation en Route (1,6-18) (a) First Exchange (1,6-10) (b) Second Exchange (1,11-13) (c) Third Exchange (1,14-18) (2) The Arrival at Bethlehem (1,19-21) b. The Narrator's Summary (1,22) B. RUTH FINDS FAVOR WITH BOAZ (2,1-23) 1. Introduction Comment concerning Boaz (2,1) 2. Report of Actions (2,2-23) a. The Meeting with Boaz (2,2-17) (1) Ruth's Declaration (2,2) (2) The Meeting Itself (2,3-17) (a) Summary Report (3,3) (b) Content (2,4-17) (i) Two Conversations (2,4-13) α . Boaz and the foreman (2,4-7) β. Boaz and Ruth (2,8-13) (ii) Mealtime (2,14-16) (iii) Report: How much Ruth gleaned (2,17) b. Epilogue: Ruth reports to Naomi (2,18-23) (1) Transition (2,18) (2) The Conversation (2,19-23) C. RUTH PROPOSES MARRIAGE TO BOAZ (3,1-22) 1. The Proposal Itself (3,1-15) a. Naomi's Clever Plan (3,1-5) b. Report of Ruth's Compliance (3,6-15) (1) Summary Report (3,6) (2) The Report Itself: At the Threshing Floor (3,7-15) (a) Midnight: Dialogue of Ruth and Boaz (3,7-13) (b) Before dawn: Boaz's Gift (3,14-15) 2. Interlude: Ruth reports to Naomi (3,16-18) a. The Report Itself: (3,16-17) b. Naomi's Response (3,18) D. WIDOW NAOMI HAS A BABY (4,1-17) 1. Report of Legal Process (4,1-12) a. Introduction: Boaz Convenes a Legal Assembly (4,1-2) b. The Legal Process Itself (4,3-12) (1) Boaz Obtains the Right of Redemption (4,3-8) (a) Boaz and kinsman: Legal Discussion (4,3-6) (b) Ceremony of the sandal (4,7-8) (2) Boaz Buys the Property and Ruth (4,9-12) 2. Naomi Receives a Son (4,13-17) a. Transition: Report of Marriage, Pregnancy, Birth (4,13) b. The Reception Itself (4,14-17)

II. THE GENEALOGY OF PEREZ (4,18-22).

Birth of Obed (4,13-17)

PH. TRIBLE ("Ruth, Book of", in: The Anchor Bible V, 1992, 842-847):

External Design. A symmetrical design structures the book (Bertman):

Three sections in chapters 1 and 2 match, in reverse order, three in chapters 3 and 4. The family bictor (1, 1, 5)

The family history(1,1-5).

- (1) Ruth receives Naomi's permission to glean in the fields (2,2).
- (2) Ruth goes to the fields (2,3).
- (3) Boaz seeks the identity of Ruth (2,4-7).
- (4) Boaz requests that Ruth stay, deems her worthy of blessing, gives her food, and orders his men (2,8-17).

(5) Returning to Naomi, Ruth reports the meeting and receives counsel (2,18-23).

The second half of the book opens with five analogous elements:

- (1) Naomi sends Ruth to the threshing floor (3,1-5).
- (2) Ruth goes to the threshing floor (3,6).
- (3) Boaz seeks the identity of Ruth (3,7-9).
- (4) Boaz deems Ruth worthy of blessing, gives her food, and protects her from other men (3,10-15).
- (5) Returning to Naomi, Ruth reports the meeting and receives counsel (3,16-18).

The next section corresponds to section two of the first half:

Kinship ties (4,1-13).

A meeting between the women of Bethlehem and Naomi (4,14-17).

The genealogy of the closing section (4,18-22) returns in theme to the family history at the beginning.

F.W. BUSH (Ruth, Esther, in WBC 9, 1996):

Act 1. Prologue and Problem: Death and Emptiness (1,1-2)

Scene 1. Setting and Problem (1,1-6)

Scene 2. Emptiness Compounded (1,7-19a)

Scene 3. Emptiness Expressed (1,19b-22)

Act 2. Ruth meets Boaz, Naomi's Relative, on the Harvest Field (2,1-23)

Scene 1. Ruth goes to Glean and Happens upon the Field of Boaz (2,1-3)

Scene 2. Ruth and Boaz meet on the Harvest Field (2,4-17a)

Scene 3. Naomi evaluates the Meeting (2,18-23)

- Act 3. Naomi sends Ruth to Boaz on the Threshing Floor (3,1-18)
- Scene 1. Naomi reveals her Plan for a Home and Husband for Ruth (3,1-5)
- Scene 2. Ruth carries out Naomi's Plan, and Boaz offers to be the Redeemer (3,6-15)

Scene 3. Naomi evaluates the Encounter: Boaz will act (3,16-18)

ACT 4. Resolution and Epilogue: Life and Fullness (4,1-22)

Scene 1. Boaz Acquires the Right to Redeem Ruth and Naomi (4,1-12)

Scene 2. A son is born to Ruth and Boaz: Naomi is Restored to Life and Fullness (4,13-17)

Scene 3. Epilogue. A Judean Family Restored: The Line of David (4,18-22).

D.A. DORSEY (The Literary Structure of the Old Testament, Baker Academic: Grand Rapids, 1999, 121-128):

a Introduction: devastation of Naomi's family (1,1-5)

b Two of Naomi's relatives deliberate whether to support her (1,6-19a)

c Return to Bethlehem in emptiness and hopelessness (1,19b-22)

- d TURNING POINT: meeting of Ruth and Boaz (2,1-23)
- c' Ruth's appeal at the threshing floor and her return to Bethlehem in fullness and hope (3,1-18)
- b' Two of Naomi's relatives deliberate whether to support Naomi (4,1-12)
- a' Conclusion: Restoration of Naomi's family (4,13-22).

I. FISCHER (Rut, in: HTKAT, 2001):

Kapitel 1: Auszug und Rückkehr von Noomi

1,1-5: Die Auswanderung von Bethlehem nach Moab

1,6-10: Noomis Dank zum Abschied

1,11-14: Der halb geglückte Überzeugungsversuch

1,15-19a: Der Treueschwur Ruts und die Rückwanderung der beiden Frauen

1,19b-22: Die Ankunft in Bethlehem und die Begegnung mit den Frauen

Kapitel 2: Rut versorgt Noomi mit Brot

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2,1-3: Das eröffnende Gespräch zwischen Rut und Noomi

2,4-7: Boas kommt auf das Feld und spricht mit dem Vorarbeiter

2,8-14: Die erste Begegnung Ruts mit Boas

2,15-17: Die Anweisung des Boas an die Erntenden

2,18-23: Das deutende Gespräch zwischen Rut und Noomi

Kapitel 3: Die nächtliche Begegnung von Rut und Boas

3,1-6: Das eröffnende Gespräch zwischen Noomi und Rut

3,7-15: Rut geht nachts zu Boas auf die Tenne

3,16-18: Das deutende Gespräch zwischen Rut und Noomi

Kapitel 4: Die gesellschäftliche (Re-)integration Noomis und Ruts

4,1-12: Die Verhandlung im Tor

4,13-17: Die Heirat als Integration Ruts und als (Re-)integration Noomis

4,18-22: Der Stammbaum Judas von Perez bis David.

M.C.A. KORPEL, The structure of the book of Ruth, Assen: Van Gorcum, 2001: She briefly discusses twenty different divisions of the text and analyses it herself as if it were a kind of poetry: 4 Cantos, 13 Sub-cantos, and 34 Canticles.

| Cantos | Sub-cantos | Canticles | | |
|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|--|
| Chapter 1 | Headings not available. | | | |
| | 1,1-5 | 1,1-2 | | |
| Ι | 1,6-10 | 1,3-5 | | |
| | 1,11-17 | 1,11-13; 1,14; 1,15-17 | | |
| | 1,18-22 | 1,18-19; 1,20-21; 1,22 | | |
| Chapter 2 | | | | |
| | 2,1-7 | 2,1-2; 2,3-4; 2,5-7 | | |
| II | 2,8-16 | 2,8-10; 2,11-13; 2,14-16 | | |
| | 2,17-23 | 2,17-19; 2,20-21; 2,22-23 | | |
| Chapter 3 | | | | |
| III | 3,1-9 | 3,1-5; 3,6-7; 3,8-9 | | |
| | 3,10-18 | 3,10-14; 3,15-16; 3,17-18 | | |
| Chapter 4 | | | | |
| | 4,1-6 | 4,1-2; 4,3-4; 4,5-6 | | |
| IV | 4,7-12 | 4,7-8; 4,9-10; 4,11-12 | | |
| | 4,13-17 | 4,13; 4,14-15; 4,16-17 | | |
| | 4,18-22 Appendix | 4,18-20; 4,21-22 | | |

M. KÖHLMOOS (Ruth, in: ATD (Neues Göttinger Bibelwerk) 9,3, 2010):

1,1-6: Von Moab nach Bethlehem

1,7-19a: Im Niemandsland

1,119b-22: In Bethlehem

2,1: Boaz

2,2: Ruth und Naomi

2,3-18a: Feld

2,18b-23: Ruth und Naomi

3,1-6: Naomi und Ruth

3,7-15: Tenne

3,16-18: Naomi und Ruth

4,1-12: Tor

4,13-17: Naomi und die Frauen von Bethlehem

4,18-22: Die Toledoth des Perez.

Quantitative structural analysis of the book of Ruth

| Texts Ruth 1,1 Ruth 1,2 Ruth 1,3 Ruth 1,4 Ruth 1,5 Ruth 1,6 Ruth 1,7 Ruth 1,1-7 Ruth 1,8 Ruth 1,9 | Words 19 20 8 14 10 18 15 | 75 82 33 54 | יהוה | Sum words 19 39 | Part I: The events before Ruth meets Boaz Scene 1 Having moved to Moab Naomi wants to return | | |
|---|---------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| Ruth 1,2 Ruth 1,3 Ruth 1,4 Ruth 1,5 Ruth 1,6 Ruth 1,7 Ruth 1,1-7 Ruth 1,8 | 20 8 14 10 18 | 82 33 54 | | | Secre 1 having moved to mode radin wants to retain | | |
| Ruth 1,3 Ruth 1,4 Ruth 1,5 Ruth 1,6 Ruth 1,7 Ruth 1,1-7 Ruth 1,8 | 8 14 10 18 | 33 54 | | 55 | | | |
| Ruth 1,4 Ruth 1,5 Ruth 1,6 Ruth 1,7 Ruth 1,1-7 Ruth 1,8 | 14 10 18 | 54 | | 47 | The first Scene is finalized and sealed by 104 words. | | |
| Ruth 1,5 Ruth 1,6 Ruth 1,7 Ruth 1,1-7 Ruth 1,8 | 10 18 | | | 61 | | | |
| Ruth 1,6 Ruth 1,7 Ruth 1,1-7 Ruth 1,8 | 18 | 48 | | 71 | - | | |
| Ruth 1,7 Ruth 1,1-7 Ruth 1,8 | | 62 | 1 | 89 | | | |
| <mark>Ruth 1,1-7</mark> Ruth 1,8 | 1.15 | 57 | 1 | 104 | - | | |
| Ruth 1,8 | 104 (4x26) | 411 | | 104 (4x26) | | | |
| | 18 | 72 | 2 | 122 | Scene 2 The decision of Naomi's daughters-in-law | | |
| Ruth 1,5 | 13 | 54 | 3 | 135 | Scene 2 The decision of Naorin's daughters-in-law | | |
| Ruth 1,10 | 6 | 22 | 5 | 135 | The second Scene is finalized and sealed by 102 | | |
| Ruth 1,10 | 14 | 55 | | 155 | words and 390 letters. | | |
| Ruth 1,12 | 19 | 70 | | 174 | words and 550 retters. | | |
| Ruth 1,12 | 22 | 74 | 4 | 196 | - | | |
| Ruth 1,13 | 10 | 43 | 4 | 206 | - | | |
| Ruth 1,8-14 | 102 (6x17) | 390(15x26) | | 102 (6x17) | | | |
| | | | | | Scone 2. Buth is determined to go with Noomi | | |
| | | | | | Scene 3 Ruth is determined to go with Naomi | | |
| | | | 5 | | The third Scene is finalized and sealed by 119 words. | | |
| | | |) | | | | |
| | | | | | 1 10 Noomi and Buth arrive in Dethleheme 47 words | | |
| | | | | | <u>1,19</u> Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem: 17 words. | | |
| | | | 67 | | - | | |
| | | | 0-7 | | - | | |
| | | | 7. | | | | |
| | · · · | | <mark>/x</mark> | · · · · | | | |
| | - | | | | Scene 4 Ruth joins the reapers; Boaz hears about her | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | 0.0 | | The fourth Scene, in which Ruth takes the initiative | | |
| | | | 8-9 | | to go and glean in the field of a potential benefactor, has 96 words: 2x the numerical value of Ruth: 48 . | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | - | 2.7 A servant discloses the identity of the Moabite maiden who returned with Naomi from Moab: 17 w. | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Seens 5. On invitation Buth closes in the field of Beer | | |
| | | | | | Scene 5 On invitation Ruth gleans in the field of Boaz | | |
| | | | | | - | | |
| | | | | | The fifth Scene is finalized and sealed by 136 words. | | |
| | | | 10 11 | | The fifth Scene is finalized and sealed by 150 words. | | |
| | | | 10-11 | | 2,13 Ruth expresses her gratitude to Boaz: 17 words. | | |
| | | | | | 2,15 Ruth expresses her gratitude to Boaz. 17 words. | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | . , | Scene 6 Ruth tells Naomi about Boaz: he is a relative! | | |
| | | | | | Scene o Ruth tens Naomi about Boaz: ne is a relative! | | |
| | | | | | 2 17 10 Puth doops borlow and takes it to Normi | | |
| | | | | | 2,17-19 Ruth gleans barley and takes it to Naomi, | | |
| | - | | | | who asks her where she had gleaned: 51 words. | | |
| | | | 12 | | 2,19 The disclosure of the name of Ruth's benefactor | | |
| | | | 12 | | to Naomi has 25 words, which is the numerical value of | | |
| | | | | | בעז (2+16+7= 25). See 3,4-5, 4,7-8, 4,10 and 4,16-17. | | |
| | | | | | 4 | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | . , | | | Scene 6 is sealed by 546 (21x26) letters. | | |
| | | | | | Scene 7 Naomi's strategy for Ruth to meet Boaz | | |
| | | | | | The seventh Scene is finalized and sealed by 255 letters. | | |
| | | | | | <u>3,4-5</u> The vital instruction Naomi gives to Ruth has | | |
| | | | | | 25 words, the numerical value of (2+16+7=25). | | |
| Ruth 3,5 | | 26 | | 769 | <u>3,5</u> Read (Q) וותאמר אליה כל אשר⁻תאמרי אלי אעשה: (Ω). | | |
| Ruth 3,1-5 | <mark>66</mark> | <mark>255(</mark> 15x 17) | | <mark>66</mark> | Compare 3,17 and see BHS at 3,5 and 3,17. | | |
| | Ruth 3,1-5 | Ruth 1,16 20 Ruth 1,17 16 Ruth 1,18 9 Ruth 1,19 17 Ruth 1,20 14 Ruth 1,21 16 Ruth 1,22 16 Ruth 1,15-22 119 (7x17) Ruth 2,1 10 Ruth 2,2 19 Ruth 2,3 14 Ruth 2,4 13 Ruth 2,5 9 Ruth 2,6 14 Ruth 2,7 17 Ruth 2,8 20 Ruth 2,1 28 Ruth 2,1 14 Ruth 2,1 15 Ruth 2,10 14 Ruth 2,11 28 Ruth 2,12 15 Ruth 2,13 17 Ruth 2,14 22 Ruth 2,15 13 Ruth 2,16 11 Ruth 2,17 11+ Ruth 2,18 15+ Ruth 2,20 22 | Ruth 1,16 20 76 Ruth 1,17 16 59 Ruth 1,18 9 35 Ruth 1,20 14 46 Ruth 1,21 16 61 Ruth 1,22 16 65 Ruth 1,22 119 (7x17) 452 Ruth 2,2 19 74 Ruth 2,2 19 74 Ruth 2,3 14 63 Ruth 2,4 13 53 Ruth 2,5 9 38 Ruth 2,6 14 57 Ruth 2,7 17 72 Ruth 2,7 17 72 Ruth 2,8 20 71 Ruth 2,10 14 63 Ruth 2,11 28 100 Ruth 2,12 15 61 Ruth 2,13 17 66 Ruth 2,14 22 84 Ruth 2,15 13 51 Ruth 2,16 11 40 Ruth 2,17 11+ <t< td=""><td>Ruth 1,16 20 76 I Ruth 1,17 16 59 5 Ruth 1,18 9 35 I Ruth 1,19 17 68 I Ruth 1,20 14 46 I Ruth 1,21 16 61 6-7 Ruth 1,22 16 65 I Ruth 1,15-22 119 (7x17) 452 7x Ruth 2,2 19 74 I Ruth 2,3 14 63 I Ruth 2,4 13 53 8-9 Ruth 2,6 14 57 I Ruth 2,6 14 57 I Ruth 2,7 17 72 I Ruth 2,6 14 63 I Ruth 2,1-7 96 (2x48) 401 I Ruth 2,10 14 63 I Ruth 2,11 28 100 I Ruth 2,12 15 61 10-11 Ruth</td><td>Ruth 1,16 20 76 237 Ruth 1,17 16 59 5 253 Ruth 1,18 9 35 262 Ruth 1,20 14 46 279 Ruth 1,21 16 61 6-7 309 Ruth 1,22 16 65 325 Ruth 1,15-22 119 (7x17) 452 7x 119 (7x17) Ruth 2,1 10 44 335 354 Ruth 2,2 19 74 354 354 Ruth 2,3 14 63 368 390 Ruth 2,4 13 53 8-9 381 Ruth 2,5 9 38 390 390 Ruth 2,6 14 57 404 Ruth 2,7 17 72 421 Ruth 2,10 14 63 475 Ruth 2,10 14 63 475 Ruth 2,11 28 100 503 Ruth 2,13 1</td></t<> | Ruth 1,16 20 76 I Ruth 1,17 16 59 5 Ruth 1,18 9 35 I Ruth 1,19 17 68 I Ruth 1,20 14 46 I Ruth 1,21 16 61 6-7 Ruth 1,22 16 65 I Ruth 1,15-22 119 (7x17) 452 7x Ruth 2,2 19 74 I Ruth 2,3 14 63 I Ruth 2,4 13 53 8-9 Ruth 2,6 14 57 I Ruth 2,6 14 57 I Ruth 2,7 17 72 I Ruth 2,6 14 63 I Ruth 2,1-7 96 (2x48) 401 I Ruth 2,10 14 63 I Ruth 2,11 28 100 I Ruth 2,12 15 61 10-11 Ruth | Ruth 1,16 20 76 237 Ruth 1,17 16 59 5 253 Ruth 1,18 9 35 262 Ruth 1,20 14 46 279 Ruth 1,21 16 61 6-7 309 Ruth 1,22 16 65 325 Ruth 1,15-22 119 (7x17) 452 7x 119 (7x17) Ruth 2,1 10 44 335 354 Ruth 2,2 19 74 354 354 Ruth 2,3 14 63 368 390 Ruth 2,4 13 53 8-9 381 Ruth 2,5 9 38 390 390 Ruth 2,6 14 57 404 Ruth 2,7 17 72 421 Ruth 2,10 14 63 475 Ruth 2,10 14 63 475 Ruth 2,11 28 100 503 Ruth 2,13 1 | | |

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| | | | | | | Part II: The events after the two met on the field |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|---|
| 51 | Ruth 3,6 | 7 | 27 | | 776 | Scene 8 Ruth does what Naomi said; Boaz meets her |
| 52 | Ruth 3,7 | 14 | 60 | | 790 | |
| 53 | Ruth 3,8 | 10 | 45 | | 800 | |
| 54 | Ruth 3,9 | 14 | 48 | | 814 | |
| 55 | Ruth 3,10 | 18 | 73 | 13 | 832 | |
| 56 | Ruth 3,11 | 18 | 54 | _ | 850 | |
| 57 | Ruth 3,12 | 12 | 37 | | 862 | |
| 58 | Ruth 3,13 | 19 | 72 | 14 | 881 | |
| <mark>8</mark> | Ruth 3,6-13 | <mark>112</mark> | <mark>416(</mark> 16x 26) | | <mark>112</mark> | Scene 8 is sealed by letters 416 (16x26) letters. |
| 59 | Ruth 3,14 | 17 | 63 | | 898 | Scene 9 Boaz gives Ruth barley for her mother-in-law |
| 60 | Ruth 3,15 | 16 | 62 | | 914 | 3,14 Boaz wants to keep her visit secret: 17 words. |
| 61 | Ruth 3,16 | 15 | 46 | | 929 | |
| 62 | Ruth 3,17 | 14 | 48 | | 943 | <u>3,17b</u> Qere: : כי אמר אלי אל-תבואי ריקם אל-חמותך. |
| 63 | Ruth 3,18 | 18 | 57 | | 961 | See 3,5. The loss of 😽 (K) is due to haplography. |
| <mark>5</mark> | Ruth 3,14-18 | <mark>80</mark> | <mark>276</mark> | | <mark>80</mark> | |
| 64 | Ruth 4,1 | 19 | 68 | | 980 | Scene 10 Boaz takes steps to redeem Naomi's land |
| 65 | Ruth 4,2 | 9 | 37 | | 989 | |
| 66 | Ruth 4,3 | 12 | 53 | | 1001 | |
| 67 | Ruth 4,4 | 29 78 (3x26) | 111 | | 1030 | <u>4,3-6</u> Boaz confers with the next of kin about the |
| 68 | Ruth 4,5 | 18 | 70 | | 1048 | redemption of Elimelech's parcel of land: 78 words. |
| 69 | Ruth 4,6 | 19 | 63 | | 1067 | |
| <mark>6</mark> | Ruth 4,1-6 | <mark>106</mark> | <mark>402</mark> | | <mark>106</mark> | |
| 70 | Ruth 4,7 | 18+ | 76 | | 1085 | Scene 11 Boaz performs the rituals and marries Ruth |
| 71 | Ruth 4,8 | 7/25 | 27 | | 1092 | 4,7-8 Boaz performs the ceremony of the sandal: 25 w. |
| 72 | Ruth 4,9 | 21 | 79 | | 1113 | 4,10 Also this crucial statement has 25 words, which |
| 73 | Ruth 4,10 | 25 | 90 | | 1138 | is not simply a happy coincidence, for 25 is the numerical |
| 74 | Ruth 4,11 | 29 | 108 | 15 | 1167 | value of בעז (2+16+7= 25). |
| 75 | Ruth 4,12 | 17 | 60 | 16 | 1184 | <u>4,12</u> "May your house be like that of Perez!": 17 words. |
| <mark>6</mark> | Ruth 4,7-12 | <mark>117</mark> | <mark>440</mark> | | <mark>117</mark> | |
| 76 | Ruth 4,13 | 15 | 51 | 17 | 1199 | Scene 12 Ruth bears a son and the women bless Naomi |
| 77 | Ruth 4,14 | 15 48=Ruth | 59 | 18 | 1214 | 4,13-15 Ruth's marriage, her motherhood and the |
| 78 | Ruth 4,15 | 18 | 67 | | 1232 | congratulations by the women underline what Ruth |
| 79 | Ruth 4,16 | 9+ | 36 | | 1241 | means to Naomi: 48 words signifying Ruth. |
| 80 | Ruth 4,17 | 16/25 | 60 | | 1257 <mark>P</mark> | 4,16-17 The baby gets a nurse and a name: 25 words. |
| <mark>5</mark> | Ruth 4,13-17 | <mark>73</mark> | <mark>273</mark> | | <mark>73</mark> | |
| | 4,18-22 | | | | | Part III: Epilogue: The genealogy of Perez |
| 81 | Ruth 4,18 | 7 | 28 | | 1264 | |
| 82 | Ruth 4,19 | 8 | 31 | | 1272 | There are ten generations from Perez (cf. 4,12!) to |
| 83 | Ruth 4,20 | 8 | 36 | | 1280 | David in which Boaz represents the seventh generation |
| 84 | Ruth 4,21 | 8 | 31 | | 1288 | and David the tenth. |
| 85 | Ruth 4,22 | 8 | 28 | | 1296 Col. |] |
| <mark>5</mark> | Ruth 4,18-22 | <mark>39</mark> | <mark>154</mark> | | <mark>39</mark> | |
| <mark>85</mark> | Ruth 1-4 | <mark>1296 (27x48)</mark> | <mark>4953</mark> | <mark>18x</mark> | <mark>1296</mark> | 48 is the numerical value of 717 (20+6+22= 48). |

Observation 4 The fact that the book is made up of a number of words that are a multiple of the numerical value of Ruth, **1296** (27x48), is an esoteric scribal device to provide the book with her signature. Compare also 2,1-7 and 4,13-15. In combination with the **85** (5x17) verses which seal the book as a literary unity, its significant number of words show that the Epilogue is an integral part of the story.

Observation 5 Also interesting is the use of the numerical value of the name of Boaz, **25**, in no less than four instances (3,4-5, 4,7-8, 4,10 and 4,16-17) to provide the passages in question with Boaz's signature.

To crown it all is the use of Ruth's and Boaz's numerical signatures in Scene 12, their marriage, the birth of their son, the congratulations for Naomi and the name giving: 48+25=73 words, which is an esoteric scribal device to underline the union of the couple.

See my article "Hidden Signatures in the Hebrew Bible".

Overview of the words spoken by the various characters

I owe thanks to Klaas Eikelenboom for having compiled this list and checked my work.

| Speech Verses Speaker Spaken to Intr. Words Sum w. 1 1,8-9 Naomi Orpah and Ruth 4 22 22 1,10 Orpah and Ruth Naomi 2 4 26 3 1,11-3 Naomi Orpah and Ruth 2 53 73 1,15 Naomi Ruth Naomi 2 54 123 6 1,15.1 Ruth Naomi 2 54 123 7 1,20-21 Naomi Women in Beth. 1 2 126 165 7.0 1,20-21 Naomi Ruth Naomi 2 12 165 10 2,4a Boaz The upper servant Boaz 2 12 12 12 2,5 Boaz Ruth 4 36 23 14 2,6-7 The upper servant Boaz 1 16 23 15 2,11-12 Boaz | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------|--------------|--------|-------|
| 2 1,0 Orpah and Ruth Naomi 2 4 26 3 1,11-13 Naomi Orpah and Ruth 2 53 79 4 1,15 Naomi Ruth 1 10 89 5 1,16-17 Ruth Naomi 2 34 125 7 1,20-21 Naomi Women in Bethl. 2 28 153 8 2,2a Ruth Naomi 5 100 163 9 2,2b Naomi Ruth 2 28 167 12 2,4b The reapers 80az 2 2 169 12 2,4b The reapers B0az 6 33 172 13 2,6-7 The upper servant B0az 6 25 197 14 2,8-9 Boaz Ruth 4 36 233 16 2,11-12 Boaz Ruth 5 8 33 17 2,13 Ruth Boaz 17 326 18< | Speech | Verses | Speaker | Spoken to | Intr. | Words | Sum w. | |
| a1,11-13NaomiOrpah and Ruth25741,15NaomiRuth1108951,16-17RuthNaomi23412361,19bWomen in Bethl.121257102-11NaomiWomen in Bethl.1216392,2aRuthNaomi510016392,2bNaomiRuth22165102,4aBoazThe reapers72167112,4bThe reapersBoaz22167122,5BoazThe upper servant633172132,6-7The upper servantBoaz772142,8-9BoazRuth4366233152,10RuthBoaz7720172,13RuthBoaz1116295182,14BoazRuth511320192,15-16BoazThe young men511346212,19aNaomiRuth311346222,20aNaomiRuth311346232,20bNaomiRuth311379242,21RuthNaomi311379253,14NaomiRuth455434263,1-3 <td>1</td> <td>1,8-9</td> <td>Naomi</td> <td>Orpah and Ruth</td> <td>4</td> <td>22</td> <td>22</td> <td></td> | 1 | 1,8-9 | Naomi | Orpah and Ruth | 4 | 22 | 22 | |
| 4 1,15 Naomi Ruth Naomi 2 30 123 6 1,19 Women in Bethl. Women in Bethl. 1 2 125 7 1,20-21 Naomi Women in Bethl. 2 28 113 8 2,2a Ruth Naomi 5 10 163 9 2,2b Naomi Ruth 2 165 10 2,4a Boaz The reapers 7 2.2 167 11 2,4b The reapers Boaz 2 2.5 107 12 2,5 Boaz Boaz 6 33 172 14 2,8-9 Boaz Ruth 4 36 233 15 2,10 Ruth Boaz 16 303 11 16 2,11-12 Boaz Ruth 36 333 19 2,15-16 Boaz The young men 5 17 320 22 2,20a Naomi Ruth 3 11 379 < | 2 | 1,10 | Orpah and Ruth | Naomi | 2 | 4 | 26 | |
| 1 1.16 Ruth Naomi 2 1.20 1.20 6 1.19b Women in Bethl. Women in Bethl. 1 2 125 7 1.20-21 Naomi Women in Bethl. 2 28 153 8 2.2a Ruth Naomi 5 100 163 9 2.2b Naomi Ruth 2 2 167 111 2.4a Boaz The reapers Boaz 2 167 12 2.5 Boaz The upper servant 6 33 172 13 2.6-7 The upper servant Boaz 6 39 279 14 2.8-9 Boaz Ruth 4 36 295 16 2.11-12 Boaz Ruth 4 39 279 17 2.13 Ruth Boaz 16 295 303 18 2.14 Boaz Ruth 3 8 303 19 2.15-16 Boaz The yong men 5 11 <td< td=""><td>3</td><td>1,11-13</td><td>Naomi</td><td>Orpah and Ruth</td><td>2</td><td>53</td><td>79</td><td></td></td<> | 3 | 1,11-13 | Naomi | Orpah and Ruth | 2 | 53 | 79 | |
| 6 1.19b Women in Bethl. Women in Bethl. 2 125 7 1.20-21 Naomi Women in Bethl. 2 28 153 8 2.2a Ruth Naomi 5 10 163 9 2.2b Naomi Ruth 2 2 165 10 2.4a Boaz The reapers 6 3 172 13 2.6-7 The upper servant 6 3 172 14 2.8-9 Boaz Ruth 4 36 233 15 2.10 Ruth Boaz 7 7 240 16 2.11-12 Boaz Ruth 4 36 233 17 2.13 Ruth Boaz 1 16 295 18 2.14 Boaz Ruth 3 8 303 19 2.15-16 Boaz The young men 5 17 320 20 2.0a Naomi Ruth 3 11 346 23 2. | 4 | 1,15 | Naomi | Ruth | 1 | 10 | 89 | |
| 7 1,20-21 Naomi Women in Bethl. 2 2 165 8 2,2a Ruth Naomi 5 10 163 9 2,2b Naomi Ruth 2 2 165 10 2,4a Boaz The reapers 7 2 167 11 2,4b The reapers Boaz 2 2 169 12 2,5 Boaz The upper servant 6 3 172 13 2,6-7 The upper servant 8 6 25 197 14 2,8-9 Boaz Ruth 4 36 233 15 2,10 Ruth Boaz 7 7 240 16 2,11-12 Boaz Ruth 4 39 279 17 2,13 Ruth Boaz 11 36 303 19 2,15-16 Boaz The voung men 5 17 320 20 2,19a Naomi Ruth 3 11 346 <t< td=""><td>5</td><td>1,16-17</td><td>Ruth</td><td>Naomi</td><td>2</td><td>34</td><td>123</td><td></td></t<> | 5 | 1,16-17 | Ruth | Naomi | 2 | 34 | 123 | |
| 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 8 2,2b Naomi Ruth 2 2 165 10 2,4a Boaz The reapers 7 2 167 11 2,4b The reapers Boaz 2 2 169 12 2,5 Boaz 7 2 169 12 2,5 Boaz The upper servant 6 3 172 13 2,6-7 The upper servant Boaz 7 7 240 16 2,11-12 Boaz Ruth 4 39 279 17 2,13 Ruth Boaz 1 16 295 18 2,14 Boaz The young men 5 8 303 19 2,15-16 Boaz The young men 5 11 320 20 2,19a Naomi Ruth 3 11 346 23 2,20b Naomi Ruth 3 11 346 | 6 | 1,19b | Women in Bethl. | Women in Bethl. | 1 | 2 | 125 | |
| 9 2,2b Naomi Ruth 2 2 165 10 2,4a Boaz The reapers 7 2 167 11 2,4b The reapers Boaz 2 2 169 12 2,5 Boaz The upper servant 6 3 172 13 2,6-7 The upper servant Boaz 6 25 197 14 2,8-9 Boaz Ruth 4 36 23 16 2,11-12 Boaz Ruth 4 39 279 17 2,13 Ruth Boaz 16 295 303 19 2,15-16 Boaz The young men 5 8 303 19 2,19a Naomi Ruth 3 8 328 21 2,19b Ruth Naomi 7 7 335 22 2,20a Naomi Ruth 3 5 351 24 2,21 Ruth Naomi 2 5 434 | 7 | 1,20-21 | Naomi | Women in Bethl. | 2 | 28 | 153 | |
| 10 2,4a Boaz The reapers Boaz 2 167 11 2,4b The reapers Boaz 2 2 169 12 2,5 Boaz The upper servant 6 3 172 13 2,6-7 The upper servant Boaz 6 25 197 14 2,8-9 Boaz Ruth 4 36 233 15 2,10 Ruth Boaz 7 7 240 16 2,11-12 Boaz Ruth 4 39 279 17 2,13 Ruth Boaz 16 295 18 2,14 Boaz Ruth 3 8 303 19 2,15-16 Boaz The young men 5 17 320 20 2,20a Naomi Ruth 3 15 351 21 2,19b Ruth Naomi 7 7 335 22 2,20a Naomi Ruth 3 17 368 22 | 8 | 2,2a | Ruth | Naomi | 5 | 10 | 163 | |
| 112, 4bThe reapersBoaz216122,5BoazThe upper servant63172132,6-7The upper servantBoaz625197142,8-9BoazRuth436233152,10RuthBoaz77240162,11-12BoazRuth439279172,13RuthBoaz116295182,14BoazRuth517300202,19aNaomiRuth38328212,19bRuthNaomi77335222,20aNaomiRuth311346232,20bNaomiRuth311346242,21RuthNaomi77335252,22NaomiRuth455434263,1-4NaomiRuth455434273,5RuthNaomi2557283,9aBoazRuth166517313,16NaomiRuth16523323,15BoazRuth16523333,16NaomiRuth113562343,17RuthNaomi113562333,18NaomiRuth113 </td <td>9</td> <td>2,2b</td> <td>Naomi</td> <td>Ruth</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>165</td> <td></td> | 9 | 2,2b | Naomi | Ruth | 2 | 2 | 165 | |
| 122,5BoazThe upper servant63172132,6-7The upper servantBoaz625197142,8-9BoazRuth436233152,10RuthBoaz77240162,11-12BoazRuth439279172,13RuthBoaz116295182,14BoazRuth58303192,15-16BoazThe young men517320202,19aNaomiRuth38328212,19bRuthNaomi77335222,20aNaomiRuth311366232,20bNaomiRuth317388242,21RuthNaomi77368252,22NaomiRuth455434273,5RuthNaomi25439283,9aBoazRuth110451303,10-13BoazRuth166517313,14MaomiRuth16556323,15BoazRuth166529333,16NaomiRuth13532343,17RuthNaomi113545353,18NaomiRuth< | 10 | 2,4a | Boaz | The reapers | 7 | 2 | 167 | |
| 132,6-7The upper servantBoaz62511132,6-7The upper servantBoaz625197142,8-9BoazRuth436233152,10RuthBoaz77240162,11-12BoazRuth439279172,13RuthBoaz116295182,14BoazRuth58303192,15-16BoazThe young men517320202,19aNaomiRuth38328212,19bRuthNaomi77335222,20aNaomiRuth311346232,20bNaomiRuth317368242,21RuthNaomi317368252,22NaomiRuth455434273,5RuthNaomi25439283,9aBoazRuth12441293,9bRuthBoaz10451303,10-13BoazRuth166517313,14bBoazRuth166523323,15aBoazRuth11355333,16NaomiRuth113557333,17RuthNaomi1 <td>11</td> <td>2,4b</td> <td>The reapers</td> <td>Boaz</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>169</td> <td></td> | 11 | 2,4b | The reapers | Boaz | 2 | 2 | 169 | |
| 14 28.9 Boaz Ruth 4 36 233 15 2,10 Ruth Boaz 7 7 240 16 2,11-12 Boaz Ruth 4 39 279 17 2,13 Ruth Boaz 1 16 295 18 2,14 Boaz Ruth 5 8 303 19 2,15-16 Boaz The young men 5 17 320 20 2,19a Naomi Ruth 3 8 328 21 2,19b Ruth Naomi 7 7 335 22 2,20a Naomi Ruth 3 11 346 23 2,20b Naomi Ruth 3 13 346 24 2,21 Ruth Naomi 3 17 368 25 2,22 Naomi Ruth 4 55 434 27 3,5 Ruth Naomi 2 5 439 28 3,9a | 12 | 2,5 | Boaz | The upper servant | 6 | 3 | 172 | |
| 1.11 | 13 | 2,6-7 | The upper servant | Boaz | 6 | 25 | 197 | |
| 1.11.1BoazRuth41.92.791.72,13RuthBoaz1162.951.82,14BoazRuth5883031.92,15-16BoazThe young men5173202.02,19aNaomiRuth3883282.12,19bRuthNaomi773352.22,20aNaomiRuth3113462.32,20bNaomiRuth353512.42,21RuthNaomi3173682.52,22NaomiRuth4554342.63,1-4NaomiRuth4554342.73,5RuthNaomi254392.83,9aBoazRuth124412.93,9bRuthBoaz1104513.03,10-13BoazRuth1665233.13,14bBoazRuth1665233.33,16NaomiRuth135323.33,17RuthNaomi1135453.53,18NaomiRuth1135453.53,18NaomiRuth115623.64,1BoazThe kinsman125693.84,3-4BoazThe | 14 | 2,8-9 | Boaz | Ruth | 4 | 36 | 233 | |
| 172,13RuthBoaz116295182,14BoazRuth58303192,15-16BoazThe young men517320202,19aNaomiRuth38328212,19bRuthNaomi77335222,20aNaomiRuth311346232,20bNaomiRuth317368242,21RuthNaomi317368252,22NaomiRuth455434263,1-4NaomiRuth455434273,5RuthNaomi25439283,9aBoazRuth10451293,9bRuthBoaz166517313,10-13BoazRuth16523323,15aBoazRuth13532333,16NaomiRuth13532343,17RuthNaomi113545353,18NaomiRuth15567374,2BoazThe kinsman12569384,3-4BoazThe kinsman236605394,4bThe kinsmanBoaz12607 | 15 | 2,10 | Ruth | Boaz | 7 | 7 | 240 | |
| 1.11 | 16 | 2,11-12 | Boaz | Ruth | 4 | 39 | 279 | |
| 1.11 | 17 | 2,13 | Ruth | Boaz | 1 | 16 | 295 | |
| 202,19aNaomiRuth38328212,19aRuthNaomi77335222,20aNaomiRuth311346232,20bNaomiRuth35351242,21RuthNaomi317368252,22NaomiRuth511379263,1-4NaomiRuth455434273,5RuthNaomi25439283,9aBoazRuth12441293,9bRuthBoaz110451303,10-13BoazRuth166517313,14bBoazRuth166529333,16NaomiRuth13532343,17RuthNaomi113545353,18NaomiRuth117562364,1BoazThe kinsman15567374,2BoazThe ten elders12569384,3-4BoazThe kinsman236605394,4bThe kinsmanBoaz12607 | 18 | 2,14 | Boaz | Ruth | 5 | 8 | 303 | |
| 212,19bRuthNaomi77335222,20aNaomiRuth311346232,20bNaomiRuth35351242,21RuthNaomi317368252,22NaomiRuth511379263,1-4NaomiRuth455434273,5RuthNaomi25439283,9aBoazRuth12441293,9bRuthBoaz110451303,10-13BoazRuth166523313,14bBoazRuth166529333,16NaomiRuth13532343,17RuthNaomi113545353,18NaomiRuth113562364,1BoazThe kinsman15567374,2BoazThe kinsman12569384,3-4BoazThe kinsman236605394,4bThe kinsmanBoaz12607 | 19 | 2,15-16 | Boaz | The young men | 5 | 17 | 320 | |
| 222,20aNaomiRuth311346232,20bNaomiRuth35351242,21RuthNaomi317368252,22NaomiRuth511379263,1-4NaomiRuth455434273,5RuthNaomi25439283,9aBoazRuth12441293,9bRuthBoaz110451303,10-13BoazRuth166517313,14bBoazRuth166523333,16NaomiRuth13532343,17RuthNaomi113545353,18NaomiRuth113562364,1BoazThe kinsman12569384,3-4BoazThe kinsman236605394,4bThe kinsmanBoaz12607 | 20 | 2,19a | Naomi | Ruth | 3 | 8 | 328 | |
| 232,20bNaomiRuth35351242,21RuthNaomi317368252,22NaomiRuth511379263,1-4NaomiRuth455434273,5RuthNaomi25439283,9aBoazRuth12441293,9bRuthBoaz1100451303,10-13BoazRuth166517313,14bBoazHousehold16523333,16NaomiRuth13532343,17RuthNaomi113545353,18NaomiRuth1562364,1BoazThe kinsman1567374,2BoazThe kinsman236605384,3-4BoazThe kinsman236605394,4bThe kinsmanBoaz12607 | 21 | 2,19b | Ruth | Naomi | 7 | 7 | 335 | |
| 242,21RuthNaomi317368252,22NaomiRuth511379263,1-4NaomiRuth455434273,5RuthNaomi25439283,9aBoazRuth12441293,9bRuthBoaz110451303,10-13BoazRuth166517313,14bBoazHousehold16523323,15aBoazRuth13532333,16NaomiRuth13532343,17RuthNaomi113545353,18NaomiRuth15567374,2BoazThe kinsman12569384,3-4BoazThe kinsman236605394,4bThe kinsmanBoaz12607 | 22 | 2,20a | Naomi | Ruth | 3 | 11 | 346 | |
| 25 $2,22$ NaomiRuth 5 11 379 26 $3,1-4$ NaomiRuth 4 55 434 27 $3,5$ RuthNaomi 2 5 439 27 $3,5$ RuthNaomi 2 5 439 28 $3,9a$ BoazRuth 1 2 441 29 $3,9b$ RuthBoaz 1 100 451 30 $3,10-13$ BoazRuth 1 66 517 31 $3,14b$ BoazHousehold 1 6 523 32 $3,15a$ BoazRuth 1 6 529 33 $3,16$ NaomiRuth 1 3 532 34 $3,17$ RuthNaomi 1 13 545 35 $3,18$ NaomiRuth 1 13 567 37 $4,2$ BoazThe kinsman 1 2 569 38 $4,3-4$ BoazThe kinsman 2 366 605 39 $4,4b$ The kinsmanBoaz 1 2 607 | 23 | 2,20b | Naomi | Ruth | 3 | 5 | 351 | |
| 26 $3,1-4$ NaomiRuth 4 55 434 27 $3,5$ RuthNaomi 2 5 439 $+ \frac{1}{7} N$ 28 $3,9a$ BoazRuth 1 2 441 29 $3,9b$ RuthBoaz 1 100 451 30 $3,10-13$ BoazRuth 1 666 517 31 $3,14b$ BoazHousehold 1 66 523 32 $3,15a$ BoazRuth 1 6 523 33 $3,16$ NaomiRuth 1 3 532 34 $3,17$ RuthNaomi 1 13 545 35 $3,18$ NaomiRuth 1 13 562 36 $4,1$ BoazThe kinsman 1 5 567 37 $4,2$ BoazThe kinsman 2 36 605 39 $4,4b$ The kinsman 8 2 36 605 | 24 | 2,21 | Ruth | Naomi | 3 | 17 | 368 | |
| 27 $3,5$ RuthNaomi 2 5 439 $+5\times$ 28 $3,9a$ BoazRuth 1 2 441 29 $3,9b$ RuthBoaz 1 100 451 30 $3,10-13$ BoazRuth 1 66 517 31 $3,14b$ BoazRuth 1 66 523 32 $3,15a$ BoazRuth 1 6 529 33 $3,16$ NaomiRuth 1 3 532 34 $3,17$ RuthNaomi 1 13 545 35 $3,18$ NaomiRuth 1 13 545 36 $4,1$ BoazThe kinsman 1 2 569 38 $4,3-4$ BoazThe kinsman 2 366 605 39 $4,4b$ The kinsmanBoaz 1 2 607 | 25 | 2,22 | Naomi | Ruth | 5 | 11 | 379 | |
| 28 $3,9a$ BoazRuth12441 29 $3,9b$ RuthBoaz110451 30 $3,10-13$ BoazRuth166517 31 $3,14b$ BoazHousehold16523 32 $3,15a$ BoazRuth16529 33 $3,16$ NaomiRuth13532 34 $3,17$ RuthNaomi113545 35 $3,18$ NaomiRuth1562 36 $4,1$ BoazThe kinsman12569 38 $4,3-4$ BoazThe kinsman236605 39 $4,4b$ The kinsmanBoaz12607 | 26 | 3,1-4 | Naomi | Ruth | 4 | 55 | 434 | |
| 293,9bRuthBoaz110451303,10-13BoazRuth166517313,14bBoazHousehold16523323,15aBoazRuth16529333,16NaomiRuth13532343,17RuthNaomi113545353,18NaomiRuth1562364,1BoazThe kinsman15567374,2BoazThe ten elders12569384,3-4BoazThe kinsman236605394,4bThe kinsmanBoaz12607 | 27 | 3,5 | Ruth | Naomi | 2 | 5 | 439 | אלי + |
| 30 $3,10-13$ BoazRuth1 66 517 31 $3,14b$ BoazHousehold1 6 523 32 $3,15a$ BoazRuth1 6 529 33 $3,16$ NaomiRuth1 3 532 34 $3,17$ RuthNaomi1 13 545 35 $3,18$ NaomiRuth1 13 545 36 $4,1$ BoazThe kinsman1 562 37 $4,2$ BoazThe ten elders1 2 38 $4,3-4$ BoazThe kinsman 2 366 39 $4,4b$ The kinsmanBoaz 1 2 | 28 | | Boaz | Ruth | 1 | 2 | 441 | |
| 31 $3,14b$ BoazHousehold16523 32 $3,15a$ BoazRuth16529 33 $3,16$ NaomiRuth13532 34 $3,17$ RuthNaomi113545 35 $3,18$ NaomiRuth117562 36 $4,1$ BoazThe kinsman15567 37 $4,2$ BoazThe ten elders12569 38 $4,3-4$ BoazThe kinsman236605 39 $4,4b$ The kinsmanBoaz12607 | 29 | 3,9b | Ruth | Boaz | 1 | 10 | 451 | |
| 32 3,15a Boaz Ruth 1 6 529 33 3,16 Naomi Ruth 1 3 532 34 3,17 Ruth Naomi 1 13 545 35 3,18 Naomi Ruth 1 17 562 36 4,1 Boaz The kinsman 1 5 567 37 4,2 Boaz The ten elders 1 2 569 38 4,3-4 Boaz The kinsman 2 36 605 39 4,4b The kinsman 8oaz 1 2 607 | 30 | 3,10-13 | Boaz | Ruth | 1 | 66 | 517 | |
| 33 3,16 Naomi Ruth 1 3 532 34 3,17 Ruth Naomi 1 13 545 + י>אלי 35 3,18 Naomi Ruth 1 17 562 36 4,1 Boaz The kinsman 1 5 567 37 4,2 Boaz The ten elders 1 2 569 38 4,3-4 Boaz The kinsman 2 36 605 39 4,4b The kinsman Boaz 1 2 607 | 31 | 3,14b | Boaz | Household | 1 | 6 | 523 | |
| 333,16NaomiRuth13532343,17RuthNaomi113545 $+ \frac{1}{2} \times 1$ 353,18NaomiRuth117562364,1BoazThe kinsman15567374,2BoazThe ten elders12569384,3-4BoazThe kinsman236605394,4bThe kinsmanBoaz12607 | 32 | 3,15a | Boaz | Ruth | 1 | 6 | 529 | |
| 35 3,18 Naomi Ruth 1 17 562 36 4,1 Boaz The kinsman 1 5 567 37 4,2 Boaz The ten elders 1 2 569 38 4,3-4 Boaz The kinsman 2 36 605 39 4,4b The kinsman Boaz 1 2 607 | 33 | | Naomi | Ruth | 1 | | 532 | |
| 364,1BoazThe kinsman15567374,2BoazThe ten elders12569384,3-4BoazThe kinsman236605394,4bThe kinsmanBoaz12607 | 34 | 3,17 | Ruth | Naomi | 1 | 13 | 545 | אלי + |
| 36 4,1 Boaz The kinsman 1 5 567 37 4,2 Boaz The ten elders 1 2 569 38 4,3-4 Boaz The kinsman 2 36 605 39 4,4b The kinsman Boaz 1 2 607 | 35 | 3,18 | Naomi | Ruth | 1 | 17 | 562 | |
| 38 4,3-4 Boaz The kinsman 2 36 605 39 4,4b The kinsman Boaz 1 2 607 | 36 | 4,1 | Boaz | The kinsman | 1 | 5 | 567 | |
| 38 4,3-4 Boaz The kinsman 2 36 605 39 4,4b The kinsman Boaz 1 2 607 | 37 | 4,2 | Boaz | The ten elders | 1 | 2 | 569 | |
| | 38 | 4,3-4 | Boaz | The kinsman | 2 | 36 | 605 | |
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| 40 | 4,5 | Boaz | The kinsman | 2 | 16 | 623 | |
|----|---------|-------------------|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|--|
| 41 | 4,6 | The kinsman | Boaz | 2 | 17 | 640 | |
| 42 | 4,8 | The kinsman | Boaz | 3 | 2 | 642 | |
| 43 | 4,9-10 | Boaz | Elders and people | 5 | 41 | 683 | |
| 44 | 4,11-12 | Elders and people | Boaz | 6 | 40 | 723 | |
| 45 | 4,14-15 | Women | Naomi | 4 | 29 | 752 | |
| 46 | 4,17 | Female neighbours | Public | 5 | 3 | 755 | |
| | | | Totals: | 138 | 755 | | |

Observation 6 Certain speeches stand out as momentous, being specifically highlighted by **17** and **26**.

- 1. The crucial discussion between Naomi and her daughters-in-law (Speeches 1-2): 26 words.
- 2. Naomi urges Orpah and Ruth to turn back (Speech 3): 53 words (numerical value of Naomi).
- 3. Ruth is adamant in her decision to go with her mother-in-law (Speech 5): **34** (2x**17**) words.
- 4. The six speeches in Chapter 1 have altogether **153** (9x**17**) words, signifying God's approval.
- 5. Words spoken by Boaz to the young men in the field (Speech 19): **17** words.
- 6. Ruth reports to Naomi what Boaz told her to do (Speech 24): **17** words.
- 7. Words spoken by Boaz during the night and the morning after (Speeches 30-32): 78 (3x26) words.
- 8. Naomi's reaction to Ruth's report about the barley as a gift from Boaz (Speech 35): 17 words.
- 9. The kinsman relinquishes his right of redemption (Speech 41): 17 words.
- 10. The name giving by the women in Bethlehem (Speeches 6, 45, and 46): 2+29+3=34 (2x17).

Observation 7 The term אשת חיל, 'virtuous woman' appears 3x in the Hebrew Bible: in Proverbs 12,4 and 31,10 and in Ruth 3,11, where Boaz describes Ruth as 'a virtuous woman'. The vital role played by Ruth as the person who restores and continues (with the help of Boaz) the line of the devastated family of Elimelech and Naomi, is precisely the reason why she deserves this honorific qualification.

However, she does not stand alone in this respect, because she has a famous forerunner in Tamar, the mother of Perez (Genesis 38). Though Tamar is not called a 'virtuous woman', her father-in-law, Judah, characterises her as 'righteous', which is as honorific as 'virtuous'. In a comparable way, like Ruth, Tamar restores and continues (with the help of Judah) the line of the devastated family of Judah and his wife.

The fact that Tamar and her son Perez are explicitly mentioned in the book of Ruth (4,12) speaks volumes, showing that the two stories are inextricably linked together. They are in many respects similar because the situations are strikingly analogous. It would be worthwhile to make a synopsis of the two stories, which has never been endeavoured as far as I know. To begin with, see E. van Wolde, "Texts in dialogue with texts: intertextuality in the Ruth and Tamar narratives", in: *Biblical Interpretation* 5,1, 1997, pp. 1-28.

This is not the place, nor the time, to go deeper into the relationship between the two stories and to give an answer to the question whether the Book of Ruth is a midrash on the Story of Judah and Tamar in Genesis 38, or on Proverbs 12,4a and 31,10-31, or on Deuteronomy 23-25; see Georg Braulik, "The Book of Ruth as Intra-Biblical Critique on the Deuteronomic Law," Acta Theologica 19 (1999), 1-20.

For a study on the literary context, structural design, and the numerical features of the Story of Judah and Tamar, see my <u>article from 2008</u>.