

## Ruth 1:1-8

Background on Ruth:

- One of two books named after a woman. Both Ruth and Esther had internal beauty
- Ruth is a Gentile, a Moabite **who married a Jew while Esther is the story of a Jewess who married a Gentile**

- Both women were committed to doing the will of God**

- Genesis 19:30-38 Country of Moab. The Moabites were the result of incest with Lot and his **firstborn** daughter

- Judges 3:12-14 Eglon king of the Moabites kept Israel captive for 18 years

- Israel and Moab are bitter enemies

- location is mainly Bethlehem, a little Moab

- During the time of the Judges (1400-1050bc,1350-1000bc), most likely early in the story (Read Jud2:16-17)

- Israel was weak in their faith, everyone did what was right in their own eyes – **this was dark time for Israel (Jud17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21;25)**

But also a time of harvest; God was seeking a bride and reaping a harvest while Israel was reaping the harvest of their disobedience

[Gal 6:7 KJV] 7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

- God was producing fruit of the Spirit in both Ruth and Naomi

The harvest today is white and ready, but the harvesters are few

[Luk 10:2 NKJV] 2 Then He said to them, "The harvest truly [is] great, but the laborers [are] few; therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

-- A good love story! A Hallmark Christmas movie? A love story that culminates in a wedding and a lineage – scarlet thread

- Story of incredible loss that causes Ruth to make a life changing decision that proves to enhance her loyalty. **Naomi will also make a life changing decision to return to her God, her people, her land**

-This story is a sample of obedience, purity, and faith. God worked in the hearts and lives of those who serve Him faithfully

➤ Read Intro in Box in Redeeming Love

-writer unknown, Jews says Samuel

-written after the time of David, since the genealogy of David is included in Chapter 4

You can relate to:

-Loving God and wanting His will

-Suffering Loss

-Feeling like the past would hold us back

-knowing redemption is possible no matter what we've gone through

## **Elimelech's Family Goes to Moab**

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. <sup>2</sup> 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.

Q1 - Elimelech means God is king

Naomi means Pleasant or Delightful

Mahlon means weak or sick

Chilion means tired or dying

Ephratha means fruitful ancient name for Bethlehem (house of bread – Israel's bread basket). **Ephratha:**

Jacob's wife Rachel was buried there after Benjamin's birth

Prophesied to be the birth place of the messiah in Micah 5:2

Caleb's wife was named Ephrath (1 Chronicles 2:19,50)

David was an Ephrathite (I Sam 17:12)

Moab country east of the Dead Sea where Jordan is today

50 miles – 7 to 10 days - This family hiked through the Jericho Pass, through the Judean wilderness near the Dead Sea, going across the Jordan River, into the land of Moab. This was a definite departure from the Promised Land of Israel, and a return towards the wilderness from which God had delivered Israel hundreds of years before.

Q2 - Ezekiel 14:13 Famine can be a punishment to turn the people to God (Deut 11:13-17)

Luk15:17 – there's always bread enough to spare when you're living in the Father's will

Naomi's husband's choices led to her instability. Has someone else's choice caused you suffering? How did God show up?

When difficult times come into our lives, we can do one of three things; endure it, escape it or enlist it. To endure our trials allows them to become master over us and we can become hard and bitter. Escaping our trials we may miss the purpose God wants to achieve in our lives. Enlisting our trials causes those trials to be our servants and they will work for us. (Rom 8:28 –And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to [His] purpose.)

We know Elimelech walked by sight and not by faith. He fled Bethlehem and never asked of or waited on God to tell him what to do next.

The safest and best place is always in the will of God. We can't run away from our problems.

<sup>3</sup> Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. <sup>4</sup> 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 <sup>[c]</sup>dwelt there about ten years. <sup>5</sup> Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

Ruth means friendship

Orpah means fawn or gazelle

It was a bad decision for Mahlon and Chilion to take Moabite wives. It was forbidden for Jews to marry Gentile women, especially those from Ammon and Moab (Deut,23:3-6,

7:1-11. Neh 13:1-3, Ezra 9:1-4). It was the Moabite women in Moses' day who seduced the Jewish men into immorality and idolatry; 24,000 people died (Num 25)

It's difficult to say that God's hand was directly in judgment against them and we often don't know why terrible things happen. What's certain here though is that life was not better in Moab than it was in Bethlehem

10 years and no children? Most likely barren? Could this be because of the famine?

Being a childless widow in these times was the lowest and most disadvantaged classes of people in those times. There was no one to support them and they were often dependent on the generosity of strangers. Times were desperate

## Naomi Returns with Ruth

<sup>6</sup> 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<sup>[d]</sup> His people by giving them bread. <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. (Blessing from Naomi)

Day 2 Q1 - Naomi heard the famine had ended, and that's when she decided to return home.

Naomi's family is ripped away from her, and she's sending her daughters in law away.

Could it have been Naomi didn't want her family in Bethlehem because it was living proof that she and her husband allowed their sons to marry Moabite women? Was she trying to cover her disobedience?

Or she may have truly wanted the very best for them and blessed them to encourage them for a brighter future. The girls were willing to sacrifice their own security of a husband and home and family because of their love for their mother-in-law.

Phil 3:20-21 But our citizenship is in heaven and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus.

-We are passing through. Our lives should look different than those who are not citizens of heaven.

- What is your heritage? Family? Do we place our hope in that?

Are we living in dark times?

How are we committed in our Christian lives regardless of social norms?

-live obediently to His word

-be light in an ever increasing dark world

-live out our faith to His glory, no matter how spiritually dark and sinful the culture

Our Hope is in Jesus!

Titus 2:11-14

Go through some of the homework starting on page 1 of Redeeming Love

Answers

1. During the time of the Judges

1A. a time of turmoil and a cycle of disobedience

2. There was a famine in the land

Define: FAMINE - extreme scarcity of food:

2A. A punishment for their disobedience

2A1.

To wrap up:

What did you learn about God from this first part in Ruth?

What did you learn to apply to your life?

HOMEWORK

For next week complete Ruth V8-22. And find a commentary to read, gain some of your own insight and please be ready to discuss.

Also, feel free to work ahead in the book; you can complete the workbook whenever you'd like – we'll give you the sections that we're going to study on the following scheduled teaching.