

RUTH 1:1-5 “SOWING AND REAPING”

"REMEMBER" IS LISTED CLOSE TO 300X'S IN THE BIBLE **WHY?** **people forget**

...*"God desperately desires for us to never forget Him. He, seemingly, in tears pleads for us to not forget Him. He says write my laws on your heart, write them on your foreheads, doorposts, everywhere so you don't forget me."* Paul says it repeatedly... I don't mind reminded you... **2 Peter**

1:12 For this reason I will not be negligent to **remind** you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. **PRAY**

The book of Ruth... Why Study This Book? First and foremost because I believe God has instructed me to take you His beautiful bride through it. Also as Chuck Missler so eloquently says, The Book of Ruth is one of the most dramatic books of **prophecy** in the Bible. The ancient Jewish Scriptures often included Ruth with the book of the prophets. The basic theme is that these 66 books are a single message system; every book, every name, every detail is there by design. In Ruth every detail not only carries this romance along, it also carries along the ROMANCE OF REDEMPTION. *Intriguing isn't it?*

BETHLEHEM → **The Cross** → **TO THE CROWN** → To the Throne of David

THE KINSMAN REDEEMER

In the Jewish liturgy, the scroll of Ruth is read on *Shavuot*, the Feast of Weeks. (This is the only feast of Moses which uses *leavened* bread.)

RUTH CHAPTER 1 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: **(ouch... boo hiss)** 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.

1 Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, *A period of time after Joshua had conquered the land, before they had a king.* **In the days**

when the Judges ruled: A 400 year period of general anarchy and oppression when the Israelites were not ruled by kings, but by periodic deliverers whom God raised up when the nation sought Him again.

Notable among the Judges were Gideon, Samson, and Deborah.

FAILURE of the Jewish people. Cry out for deliverance... God delivers... fail again... cry out... God delivers... cry out again 6 times this occurs.

The **days when the Judges ruled** were dark days for Israel!

this was a time of scandal (Samson; a celebrated hero but in reality there was more glory in his death than in his whole life combined); not a spiritually high time.

Ruth takes place during that era. chaos, confusion, catastrophe, calamity, uncertainty... urgency

JUDGES... look at the last word spoken in the book of Judges... chapter 21 verse 25 **RELATIVISM**... *In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.* A repeated theme throughout the 400 years that Israel was not ruled by Kings. (**Judges 17:6; 18:1; 19:1, and 21:25**).

1 Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled that there was a famine in the land.

“**FAMINE**” (One of 13 in the Bible.) The reason why the family leaves the land; but also typically speaks of a visitation of God’s judgment (Lev 26). Possibly the famine is in response to the spiritual condition of the country.

*Drought and famine were among the judgments God said would come upon the Land as a result of failure to keep the Law (Lev 26:18-20; Deut 28:23-24). Furthermore, the drought did not affect Moab, which is very close to Israel, separated only by the Dead Sea. So this was a local famine in Israel only, **WHICH POINTS TO THIS BEING A DIVINE JUDGMENT***

And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, “Bethlehem-Judah” why? there was a different Bethlehem... one in Zebulun. So Bethlehem Judah used as a distinction from any other. Because of the Book of Ruth, the House of David is linked to Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)

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 “Dwell or sojourn”: *guwr, goor* which means “a resident alien.” The root meaning is “to live among people who are not blood relatives; as a foreigner.” This indicates the purpose of the trip was not permanent residency: 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 (**2 Chron. 2 tells us they were the founding family of Bethlehem**) of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and **REMAINED** there. (comfortable in the world)

Elimelech “God is my King” Really?

Naomi “my Pleasant one, sweetness”

Mahlon “weakness; sickly”

Chilion “wasting away” *two boys might have been sickly at birth... after all they both appear to die prematurely.*

Judah “place of praise”

Bethlehem “House of Bread”

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: (***ouch... boo hiss***) 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.

DISOBEDIENCE **Duet. 7 verse 2** God delivers the nations into the Israelite hands and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. ³ Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.

Mahlon married Ruth & **Chilion** married Orpah.

Jews were forbidden to marry Gentile women, especially those from Ammon and Moab (Deut 7:1-11; 23:3-6; Neh 13:1-3; Ezra 9:1-4. In Numbers 25 it was the Moabite women who seduced the Jewish men into immorality and idolatry; and as a result, 24,000 people died.

Again The end of verse 2 And they went to the country of **MOAB** and remained there. Their property In **Bethlehem** was gone. It was either sold or lost.

MOAB ONLY 50 MILES AWAY As the priest, protector and provider of his family **Elimelech** takes his family out of the promised land and into a pagan land full of idol worshippers. *To do so, he had to hike through the desolate 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. These were clearly steps in the wrong direction.* Not very far away and not too difficult is the path away from God. "My God is King" Elimelech decides to do it his way... CONSEQUENCES TO DISOBEDIENCE!!!

LET'S REMIND OURSELVES OF MOAB'S ORIGIN.

God is forging Abraham's character... character is forged in all the small moments of life and revealed in the big ones. **Abraham was called a friend to God and God will share His intentions... with His friend.**

Those intentions... Genesis chapter 18 verse 20... And the LORD said, "Because the **outcry** zah'-ak (**a shriek**) against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave. God shares with Abraham that His righteousness and justice demands the destruction of the wicked in Sodom and *Gomorrah*. The Hebrew word for "**outcry**" is used in Scripture to describe the cries of the **oppressed and brutalized**.

Abraham in bold intercession... 6 what if's? 50... 45... 40... 30... 20... 10?

Disguising perversions. The violent depravity of these Sodomites was way over the top! **Genesis chapter 19 verse 5**... And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them *carnally*." **This means exactly what you hope it doesn't.** They will become too wicked to live.

HOW LOW COULD LOT GO... Low enough to play handball against the curb! SAD! Here is Lot's offer... verse 8 See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men. **the offer was a monstrous breach of fatherly duty. Sodom had gotten inside of Lot!**

The angels struck the perverts with blindness! Time to get out of dodge... or in this case Sodom.

THERE HAS BEEN A STEADY PROGRESSION OF COMPROMISE IN LOT'S LIFE. *He went from looking toward Sodom* (Genesis 13:10), *to pitching his tent toward Sodom* (Genesis 13:12), *to living in Sodom* (Genesis 14:12) **and then sitting in the gate of Sodom.**

Lot was in the worst of all possible places. HE HAD TOO MUCH OF THE WORLD TO BE HAPPY IN THE LORD and too much of the LORD to be happy in the world. But he and his daughters were still delivered.

LOT'S WIFE "LOOKED BACK" HER HEART WAS IN SODOM AND THERE HER SOUL WOULD DIE.

Verse 30 of Genesis chapter 19 says, And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave. and now things are really going to **cave in** on Lot. **Caves were often tombs!** Certainly for Lot a spiritual tomb.

So the darkness of Sodom and Gomorrah has followed this **COMPROMISED FAMILY** to their dark and cold cave... **verse 31** Now the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father *is* old, and *there is* no man on the earth to come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. ³² Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." **These girls had absorbed the culture of their home town. How many times had they seen how WINE AND SEX mix together? While "UNDER THE INFLUENCE" man's inhibitions dissolve. Many unthinkable things happen while DRUNK.** Yes, they were educated in the ways of Sodom.

How could Lot's daughters ever forget their dad offered them to the perverted men outside? R Kent says it well, "So when the successive father-daughter seductions took place, his girls used the craft he had bequeathed them. It was his wine, his deceit, his betrayal mixed together and served in an infamous cup in the depths of the cave. Their dishonor of him was brilliant... because with cruel irony he himself carried out the shameful act he had first suggested to the men of Sodom. Lot had effectively allowed Sodom into his daughters' souls."

Mom and Dad, what culture surrounds your household? What are your children picking up from you. Oh, we know what they are picking up from the culture. Our lives can be so loud that our children don't hear what we are saying.

Genesis 19 Verse 33 So they made their father drink wine that night. Lot and his family lost everything in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Even so, they quickly have a stock of **wine**. They either brought this with them or they obtained it quickly. **THIS SHOWS THE PRIORITIES OF A COMPROMISED HEART.**

Alcohol... 4 million for a 30 second ad. As proverbs 20 verse one says, "Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise." **Eph. 5:17** Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

IN THE UNITED STATES 100,000 PEOPLE DIE EACH YEAR IN ALCOHOL-RELATED DEATHS.

Alcohol abuse costs the nation hundreds of billions of dollars each year.

Still, the average American television viewer sees 90,000 incidents of drinking on television by age 21 and 100,000 beer commercials by age 18.

³³ So they made their father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. ³⁴ It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, "Indeed I lay with my father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in *and* lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." ³⁵ Then they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when

she lay down or when she arose. ³⁶ Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. **Sodom was alive in the cave.** Hughes points out, "The story's conclusion carries the last mention of Lot in the Old Testament. He is of no further importance to the history of salvation. His death receives no mention. So much for the "righteous" man who was sucked into the world. Lot lived as close to the world as he could, hanging on to it for dear life... to the "bitter" end. ³⁷ The firstborn bore a son and called his name **MOAB**; he *is* the father of the **Moabites** to this day. ³⁸ And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi; he *is* the father of the people of Ammon to this day.

Consequences to sin are like a pebble hitting a still pond... they reverberate throughout all of time. Oh how scripture warns us... *"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."* (Gal. 6:7-8)

As you read through the Old Testament, you see the Moabites and the Ammonites hassling God's people continually. It all started with a believer drinking wine in the "**CAVE OF DEPRESSION**" because he didn't leave the city when he should have.

Moabites had hired Balaam to curse Israel, during Israel's pilgrimage to Canaan (Numbers 22:1-8).

Under normal circumstances **Moabites** were barred from participation in the national, corporate life of Israel (Deut 23:3-6).

Thus, Moab had its beginning in a cave and, according to Zephaniah, its ending in a grave.

And this is where Elimelech "God is my King" took his precious wife and two sons. **In Psalm 108, God refers to Moab as His washpot. A more correct literal translation would be, "MOAB IS MY TOILET BOWL."** So, in taking a trip to Moab, Elimelech and Naomi were saying, "It's getting tough here in the House of Bread, the Place of Praise. Let's go swim in the toilet for awhile."

IN MOAB, ELIMELECH DIED. "GOD IS KING" always dies in **Moab**. If I'm swimming in the toilet bowl of the world, I can no longer say, "God is my

King.” Once I leave Bethlehem-Judah—the House of Bread and the Place of Praise—**the rule and reign of God in my life will dissipate and die.**

Courson says it this way... “When God is no longer my King, it is only a matter of time before the song on my lips ceases to exist. Whereas at one time, there was a beautiful flow of praise and adoration to the Lord—there is now cynicism and sourness, murmuring and complaining because Mahlon is dead.

Chilion was the next to die. Have you ever thought, *What’s wrong with me? Why has the satisfaction which was once so sweet to me departed?* Could it be that you left the House of Bread and the Place of Praise?

You see, Naomi’s experience is a perfect picture of exactly what takes place when we leave the House of Bread and the Place of Praise: First, God is no longer our King; then the song departs from our heart; finally, satisfaction leaves our soul. **It’s an order that is absolute and irrefutable.** And we have all experienced it to some degree.

SIN IS EASY TO GRAB AND HARD TO LET GO!!!

If you’re having a difficult time praising and worshiping, if you feel far removed from **JUDAH, THE PLACE OF PRAISE**—it could be because you’re not dwelling in **BETHLEHEM THE HOUSE OF BREAD**... the Word of God. Once you’re dwelling in the Word, you can’t help but become a person of praise.

Believer beware Oh yes God is a God of amazing grace and many times as the prophet Isaiah says, He makes **beauty for ashes**, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Is. 61:3 God is in the business of making sweet the sour of life, of turning ugly monochrome into **TECHNICOLOR**. But some sins cannot be undone in this world... sometimes our sin and choices take us from **TECHNICOLOR** to monochrome.

Naomi’s loss was not **punitive**—it was **corrective**. As we will soon see God’s amazing grace will strike again. Praise God when the prodigal comes to his senses, repents and turns back to God.

The road back to God is sometimes hard and humbling... Naomi will take this road... how humble... how broken she must be. [Psalm 147:3](#) He heals the **brokenhearted** And binds up their wounds.

1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened to them as **examples**, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come... airing dirty laundry so you and I learn to keep ours clean. May you be a church that learns from the mistakes of others. Please, walk with God. Do what is right according to His word and not **according** to what your flesh dictates.