

Ruth 1

Jesus

I. Introduction

- **Story of God's Redemption** Those many would call unredeemable
- **Story of God's Love** Mercy for the outcast/Kindness to the sinner
- **Story of God's Sovereignty** Over all things/Loving hand in the affairs of men

Narrative of Ruth asks how serious we are we when we sing...
You give and take away...Blessed be the Name of the Lord

Job 1:21 [After Job lost all his children] "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The **Lord gave**, and the **Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord.**" [Are we there yet?]

At what point in trials do we begin to question God's goodness? His care for us?
A seed must die to in order to bring new life

1 Corinthians 15:35b... what you sow is not made alive **unless it dies.**

Jesus said we must die in order to truly live as we were created to live

Matthew 16:25 ...whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever **loses his life** for My sake will find it.

- **Die to Entitlement Mentality:** Everything we think we deserve
- **Die to Self:** Self-Life, Selfishness, Self-Will, Self-Determination

Die in order to live.

To be free of the Tyranny of Self and set a new King on the Throne of our Life

John 12:24 ... unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground **and dies**, it remains alone; but if it dies, it **produces much** grain.

- **Ruth challenges us** to trust God's goodness when everything looks/feels really bad
- **Ruth encourages us** to trust is God's greatness when He takes His time to fix things
- **Ruth assures us** that whatever God allows to be taken from us He will restore...

Joel 2:25 "... I will restore to you the years that the ... locust has eaten

Job 42:12 [last chapter] ... the Lord blessed the latter days of Job **more** than his beginning

We cannot outgive God/Our sacrifice will not compare to what is to come!

Mark 10:28 [Peter to Jesus] **See, we have left all and followed You.**" ²⁹ So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, ³⁰ who shall not receive a **hundredfold now in this time**—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, **eternal life.**

Ruth begins w/death/darkness but moves quickly to life/light
As we see the curtain of God's sovereign plan increasingly revealed

- God has an unseen plan He will fulfill **as we trust Him...**

Ruth 3:18 [Key Verse] [Naomi to Ruth] "Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out for the man will **not rest until he has concluded** the matter this day."

Philippians 1:6 [I am...] confident of this very thing, that He who has **begun a good work** in you **will complete it** until the day of Jesus Christ

- **Setting:** Israel in time of Judges. Most set in Harvest Season; Fall
- **Date:** 1160 BC to 1100 BC Time of Judges.

Judges 21:25 In those days there was no **king in Israel**; everyone **did what was right** in his own eyes.

- **Author:** Prophet Samuel
- **Purpose of the Book**
 1. Reveal Genealogy of David coming through two outcasts Boaz/Ruth
 2. Confirm God's sovereignty in the mundane/routine affairs of men
 3. Tell the Story of Redemption through a Kinsman **Redeemer**
 - Nearest relative/Kin buying back what was have lost
 - Picture of the Jesus: Reason God had to become a man to die for us

- **3 Main Characters**

1. **Naomi:** Israelite
2. **Ruth:** Moabitess
3. **Boaz**
 - Wealthy Landowner in Bethlehem
 - Picture our Redeemer
 - Also an outcast? Boaz mother is Rahab the ex-Harlot from Joshua

- **JV McGee Chapter Outline of Ruth**

1. In the Land of Moab
2. In the field of Boaz
3. On the Threshing Floor of Boaz
4. In the Heart and Home of Boaz

- **Ruth:** Story of God's Redemption/God's Love/God's Sovereignty

II. 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. 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.

- **Days when Judges ruled:** Before Israel had first King; i.e. Saul
- **Famine:** God's judgement on the land for Godlessness/Lawlessness
 1. Served false-gods of the land
 2. Sold by God to their enemies
 3. Slaves to sin/Experiencing harsh consequences
 4. Cry out to Living God for deliverance
 5. Delivered by God/Time of refreshing
 6. Complacent/Ungrateful to God and back to...
 7. Serving false-gods of the land

Israel is now in the consequence stage: Famine

Beautiful Israelite family leaves Bethlehem for better life in Moab

- **Father, Mother and two Children**

1. **Elimelech** My God is King. [Then why are you going the wrong way?]

James 4:13 [Did you pray about it?] Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow... 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." 16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

2. **Naomi** My Delight. rt. Kindness, pleasantness, beauty, favor
3. **Mahlon** Sickly
4. **Chilion** Pining. Wasting away

Moab now under Israel's control. How?

- **Earlier in Judges 20:** Moab oppressing Israel

1. Israel brought tribute to Eglon King of Moab year after year
2. **Ehud a left-handed Judge** of Israel at the time has had enough...

Judges 3:20b... [Ehud to King of Moab...] "I have a message from God for you." So he arose from his seat. 21 Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the dagger from his right thigh, and **thrust it into [King of Moab's] belly**. 22 Even the hilt went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the dagger out of his belly; and his entrails came out. **30** ... Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had **rest for eighty years**.

- **Thus, Israel now controls Moab**

1. Leave Bethlehem [House of Bread] *because there is no bread*
2. Elimelech Family goes to Moab and put down roots...

SUMMARY Elimelech's Family Goes to Moab

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...

Immediately Husband dies and 10 Years pass

Wife without husband/Kids without a dad. I thought we left for better?

- **Sons Marry:** Things are looking up? [Disobedient to marry Pagan wives]
- **Sons Die:** Leaving Naomi alone with 2 Moabite daughter-in-laws?
 1. **Orpah:** Gazelle. rt. Stiff-necked, obstinate
 2. **Ruth:** Friendship

5b ... so, the woman Naomi survived her two sons and her husband.

- Came for life/hope found only death/despair

Proverbs 13:12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick...

- **John 11:** Mary/Martha's brother, Jesus best friend Lazarus is sick. Real sick.

John 11:2b... "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." 4 When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So, when He heard that he was sick, He **stayed two more days** in the place where He was. [Lazarus dies] ... **20** Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. 21 Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

Q. Why did Jesus wait till Lazarus was dead? **A.** He had an unseen plan better than healing

**... for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.
Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus arise!**

- Couldn't this Man who opened the eyes of the blind keep this man from dying? **A. Yes**
- **Could God have kept Naomi's Husband and children from dying? Yes**

Isaiah 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts."

God had a greater plan for Naomi and Ruth. A plan that would bring forth one of the greatest kings who ever lived and ultimately the King of Kings Jesus Christ

- **Could Naomi see it? No. Should she still trust in a good God?**

2 Corinthians 5:7 ... we walk by faith, **not by sight.**

John 20:29b [Jesus] ... Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed

- Who would have though the marrying a JW would draw me to dig into the Word of God and eventually become a Pastor? See her saved and beautiful woman of God?

Romans 8:28 ...we know that **all things** work together **for good** to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also

predestined to be **conformed to the image** of His Son

- **Purpose:** God's glory as we are conformed into the image of Christ
- Begins with being **conformed to His death**

Philippians 3:10... that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to **His death...**

- **Naomi has a choice:** Die to self and live to God or become bitter resentful to God

1 Corinthians 6:19b... you are not your own? **20** For you were **bought at a price;** therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

- Bought by God to live for His plan...

1 Peter 1:18 ... not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, **19** but with the **precious blood of Christ**

- Is His plan for you good? Is your God good?

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a **future and a hope.**

- Naomi thinks her life is over. She seems to have no future/no hope

But...In Spiritual Unseen Dimension/Realm of All-knowing/All-seeing God

God has a plan even as we struggle trusting a God who at the time seems to not care

2 Kings 6:17 [Elisha/Servant surrounded by enemies] ...Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the Lord **opened the eyes** of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

SUMMARY Elimelech's Family Goes to Moab

III. Naomi Returns with Ruth

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.

- **God's judgment on Israel is over** [for a time]
- Bread in land of Israel because God had visited His people

**Naomi arose to go home w/less than she left with
No husband. No sons.**

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. **8** 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. **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.”

Naomi leaves the decision to follow up to them. Count the cost

- **Naomi knew...**
 1. To follow God whole-heartedly...it must be completely their choice
 2. They must count the cost or it would end in failure/turning back
- **Counting the cost would mean leaving all...**
 1. Leave friends/family Israel would be their home/Leave mom/dad
 2. Leaving traditions YHWH/Living God would be their only God
- **Counting the cost would lead to questions...**
 1. Why did your God allow your husband to die?
 2. Why did your God allow our husbands to die?
- **Counting the cost would lead to an uncertain future...**

Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, **not knowing where he was going** ...10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, **whose builder and maker is God.**

- **No pressure from Naomi...**
 1. Can't force/drag someone into the Kingdom of God
 2. Being convinced against our will is not being convinced at all

Faith. All or nothing...leaving all, having questions still unanswered,
Not knowing exactly where we are going and going wholeheartedly anyway
- For those of us who choose to jump there is **no other choice but the Living God**

1 Kings 18:21 [Elijah] How long will you falter between two opinions? **If the Lord is God, follow Him**; but if Baal, follow him.

- **Chemosh the god of Moab:** God who demanded human sacrifice
- **YHWH the Living God?** God who provided His Son as sacrifice in our place

Count the cost ...Leaving all, unanswered questions, uncertain future

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?**

- **Emotional time...**
 1. I am no relation to you anymore.

2. My sons/your husbands are dead
3. I won't be having any more sons for you to marry

13b... No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me!"

- Naomi is grieved over circumstances but pursues God of Israel anyway

What Naomi could not see is that the hand of the LORD would go out for her shortly! There is never reason for us to despair if we believe the hand of the LORD has gone out against me. If we will return to Him, His hand will go out for us again! Naomi had no idea - not the slightest - of how greatly God was going to bless her in a short time.

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

- **Orpha:** Gazelle, Stiff-necked, obstinate All talk and a kiss
- **Ruth:** Friendship walked the walk Clung to Ruth/Clung to her God

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." 16 But Ruth said: "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.

- I've watched your life, your faith, your determination even when things got hard...

People should be able to look at your life, just as Ruth looked at Naomi's, and say "I want your God to be my God." Your trust in God, and turning towards Him in tough times, will often be the thing that draws others to the LORD. [Guzik]

- Naomi stops trying to convince Ruth to go home. Walk together...

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?"

- **Call me Mara:** Bitterness. rt. Chafed/angry/discontented
- **Naomi:** Straightforward/No fluff/No nonsense like Nathaniel...

John 1:45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." 46 And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." [Jesus likes him...] 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" 48 Nathanael said to Him,

"How do You know me?"

Fine line between sinfully "just telling it like it is" and "righteous straightforwardness"

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab.

- **Naomi returns with Ruth the Moabites:**
 1. **Moabites:** Outcasts in Israel.
 2. **Moabites:** Descended of Lot through incestuous relationship w/daughters
 3. **Moabites:** Forbidden to enter assembly Lord/His people [Deut. 23:3-5]
- Yet Ruth will be received by God's grace. Jesus would be her descendant

22b... Now they came to Bethlehem at the **beginning of barley harvest.**

- **Fall:** Beautiful time of year...
 1. Seeds sown have died and sprung up to new better life
 2. Harvest Season begins and God's blessings ready to be enjoyed [Ch.2]

SUMMARY Naomi Returns with Ruth