

Ruth  
Lesson 3  
A Failure of Faith

Ruth 1:16-17

*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. 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.*

Naomi:

1) Naomi's Choices

Ruth 1:1-5

Sojourn (Heb. Guwr) means "to turn aside for lodging, to live as a guest."

Continued (Heb. Hayah) means "to exist, to commit" (emphatic)

Dwelled (Heb. Yashab) means "to sit down, remain, settle in, endure, habitate."

Psalm 1:1

*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*

Walk (Heb. Halak) means "to wander, walk, go along"

Stand (Heb. Amad) means "to abide, continue, dwell."

Sit (Heb. Yashab) (same word as in Ruth 1) – "remain and settle in"

Two applications:

1. This is the progression of sin in our lives.
2. This is the progression to "coziness" with the world system and way of thinking.

I Peter 1:17

*And if you call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.*

I Peter 2:11

*Dear beloved, I beseech you as stranger and pilgrims, abstain from  
fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.*

Sojourn (Greek) carries the idea of foreign residency.

2) Naomi's Crisis

Ruth 1:3-5, 6-7.

3) Naomi's Chiding

Ruth 1:1-15, 19-22

*And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi (Heb = pleasant), call me  
Mara (Hebrew = bitter), for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with  
me. I went out full and the Lord has brought me home again empty; why  
then call you me Naomi; seeing the Lord has testified against me and the  
Almighty hath afflicted me.*

A state of Bitterness.

a) Bitterness Described.

Esau

Genesis 27:34

Bitterness (Heb. Mara) means discontented, bitter, angry, heavy.

Waters of Mara

Exodus 15:23

*And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of  
Marah, for they were bitter; therefore, the name of it was called Marah.*

Bitterness dries up the soul. The bitter person has no resources for themselves or  
you. You cannot look for any refreshment from a bitter person.

Job 23:2

*Even today is my complaint bitter.*

Additional element: rebellion.

Bitterness has an edge to it.

Bitter Water and Sweet

James 3:11

Bitter (Gr. Pikros) means sharp and acrid.

There is a sharpness to bitterness. Just like Naomi snapping out at her friends, when she returns, as we will see later in the book.

Acts 8:23

*You are in the gall of bitterness.*

Gall (Greek) is from the word “choler” and refers to a greenish hue, a poison, a wormwood.

Bitterness here refers to acidity or poison.

It is portrayed as an acid that eats at you, a poison to your spirit, and it is not attractive.

#### b) The Effects of Bitterness

Hebrews 12:15

*Lest any root of bitterness springing up...*

Ruth 1:6-8

*Then she (Naomi) arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her daughters- in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. And Naomi said unto 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.*

Ruth 1:9-15

“Go Back” - Several times, Naomi tells Ruth and Orpah to do this.

The greatest tragedy in the book of Ruth is that Orpah went back.

Ruth 1:16-17.

Entreat come from a primary root word meaning “to impinge by accident or violence, to come between.”

The idea is one of putting an obstacle between or a barrier.

Leave means “to relinquish, loosen or forsake.”

After can mean “beside, intimacy.”

The gist of these verses then is:

*“Stop putting up a barrier between us, pushing me away and trying to get me to abandon you and relinquish my purpose to go to Israel with you, or trying to get me to stop following you back to your homeland. I have every intention of going with you – staying with you, adopting your people and following your God. I intend to stay in Israel until I am dead and buried, and this is my vow to the Lord, Jehovah.”*

There is an element of rebuke in these words.

Hebrews 12:15

*Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For you know how that afterward when he would have inherited the blessing he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

Looking diligently (Greek word) meaning beware! Take oversight!

How does bitterness impact the bitter person?

It “troubles” them. This word carries the idea of crowding in or annoying.

How does it affect others?

It “defiles” others. The word means to sully, contaminate, or taint.

Failing of the grace of God means to fall short or come behind.

The Antidote for Bitterness?

This begins with a proper view of God and his purposes and love for us.

### For Further Thought

Take a moment to read Proverbs 7:6-27 and as you read consider how temptation works. What were the steps downward that the young man took in succumbing to temptation? How does this compare to the Walk-Stand-Sit progression in Psalm 1:1?

How does bitterness “take root” in our hearts? How does a focus on God’s love and purposes for us help to weed out any bitter roots?