

# Ordinary People, Extraordinary God

## A study of the book of Ruth

### Part 1: Context & Background- Ruth 1:1-7

- **Ruth 1:1a;** *"In the days when the judges ruled..."* The story of Ruth takes place during a *low point* in the history of the nation of Israel.
- **Joshua 24:31;** *"Israel served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him, who had experienced everything the Lord had done for Israel."*
- **Judges 2:10-19;** *"After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what He had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals. They forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They provoked the LORD to anger because they forsook Him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. In His anger against Israel the LORD handed them over to raiders who plundered them. He sold them to their enemies all around, whom they were no longer able to resist. Whenever Israel went out to fight, the hand of the LORD was against them to defeat them, just as he had sworn to them. They were in great distress. Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. Yet they would not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. Unlike their fathers, they quickly turned from the way in which their fathers had walked, the way of obedience to the LORD's commands. Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, He was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the LORD had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them. But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers, following other gods and serving and worshiping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways."*
- **Judges 21:25;** *"In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit."*
- The book of Judges portrays the *sad* truth that Israel had *forgotten* their God.
- **Ruth 1:1b;** *"there was a famine in the land..."* Not just political & religious *upheaval*, but physical *suffering* was pervasive across the land of Israel. Sounds like America.
- **Historical setting:** during the time of the Judges, after Israel had conquered & inhabited the land of Canaan (Promised Land). Between 1400 & 1050BC.
- **Authorship:** *no* author is mentioned by name; however, there is a mention of King David & his genealogy, so it was likely penned after the events, during David's rule.
- **Location:** *Bethlehem* and *Moab* are the two primary locations.