



Ruth Chapter 1

Getting God's Best

Chapter 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 Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

Verse 1 – Bethlehem = house of bread (food), a city in Judah, Judah = praise. A famine in the land. The famine was in the Promised Land.

- Famine is a difficulty or dry spell. Few miracles, more problems than answers. You don't easily find what you need. A tough time. Hard to wait on God sometimes when looking at our problems.
- The hard time or famine caused this man to move. Because of the famine they left the place of promise...House of Bread. Didn't wait in that place. Never asked God it seems.
 - Don't let a hard time send you where you shouldn't be. Make sure God is in or with you in that place.
- Goes to Moab. Not the place God ultimately wanted him to be. They only went there intending to sojourn there or just visit for a while.

Application for Today:

- Don't let a hard time send you where you shouldn't be or do what you shouldn't do.
- Just because it seems logical and is easy to get there, it doesn't mean that God wants you there.
- Make sure God dwells in the place or is with you on this journey.
- Just because it was the Promised Land and the place where God promised He would bless (a place of bread, provision, and praise....it doesn't mean you can't face a hard time or season there. But the hard dry season doesn't mean you have to leave.
 - Job might be dry,
 - Your church may be going through a dry spell,
 - Your marriage may be facing a famine, doesn't mean that it is time to leave. Check with God first!

²And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

³And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons.

⁴And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.



⁵ And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

Verse 2 – Elimelech = my God is king. Naomi = my delight. Mahlon = sick. Chilion = pinning or wasting away. Ephrathites = fruitfulness. Only intended to visit for a while but here we see they continued there in that place. Stayed there too long.

Verse 3 – Husband dies and leaves his family there. Where are you leading your family man of God? What you do will impact your family.

Verse 4 – They stayed there 10 years and took wives there from that place. Orpah = gazelle. Ruth = friendship, beauty. Future grandmother for David.

Verse 5 – Being in the wrong place doesn't add up in the end. Naomi has now lost more than she has gained. Do the math.

Application for Today:

- When you make a bad decision, you may not realize it until it is too late or you have lost more than you expected.
- Sometimes bad decisions have an immediate payoff, but in the end, you end up losing more than you have gained. They started out with increase, added two more people; but in the end they lost more lives than they had expected.
 - Think about it. Haven't you made decisions that had some early benefit or pleasure but in the end all you have is regrets.
 - Sin can have some early pleasure but it will not last.
- They stayed longer than they had planned. Some decisions are easy to get into but hard to escape.
- When you are not in your divine place, your loss is always greater than your gain.

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 how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread.

⁷ Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

Verse 6 – Something caused her to rise from that place and go back. Notice what prompted her to move. After she had suffered so much loss and her future looked so bad, her condition prompted her to go back. Second, the word. She heard a word there in that place how God had visited his people in the place they had left. He was feeding His people bread in the house of bread.

- The word caused her to leave Moab and go back to where God was moving. Did you just hear what I said?



Application for Today:

- It may be time to leave where you are losing and get to where God is moving.
- How much will you lose before you move? Move back to the place of promise in God.
- If it wasn't for the loss and tragedy....she never may have moved. Sometimes we would never have realized the need to come back to God had it not been from the loss and pain from bad decisions.
- You'll never get where you're going until you leave where you are.
- If you can't move physically, you must move your thought life. Your move starts in your mind...change your mind.
- The Word still works today. The Gospel or good news from God is designed to reach you no matter where you have fallen. Salvation and the start of your new season comes from God's word and good news.
- There is a word for our situation that will set you free.

Verse 7 – She lost so much but now she leaves with her two daughters. She still had something left. Stop tripping about your loss, you still have something left to help you make that move.

- The move, that's the part you have to play in order to get into position for your miracle and getting God's best. It is in your move of faith. Faith releases what He has designed for you.
- She acted on the word. Previous verse she heard...now she acts on the word that she heard. Applies it. She would have stayed there had she not heard the word and good news.
- She didn't see it, but she heard about it...great faith...because faith comes by hearing the word.
- Maybe something you hear today about Him moving will cause you to rise up. Her hope was in God so she moved by faith.
- Took all she had left which means she didn't make provision to come back to that place.
- They start out on the way back to Judah. She knew the way back because she had been there before.

Application for Today:

- It may be time for you to leave your Moab and come back to God.
- Your miracle is dependent upon your move.
- You will never get to where God wants you to be until you leave the spiritual place you are now.
- Don't get hung up or trip about what you have lost; God will still allow you to have something left.
- Take everything with you....don't leave an excuse to go back into sin.
- It is one thing to hear the word of God and see how He is moving and where you need to go; it is another thing to actually apply and act upon that word and good news.
 - Just knowing the word is not enough; you have to be a doer of the word and apply it to your situation.
- When you act upon the word, praise (Judah) is in your immediate future.
- Naomi would have stayed right there but she heard a word about God moving.

- What is your move? It could be a change of habits, changed attitude, change from trusting in sin and self and trust God instead.

⁸ And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

⁹ The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

¹⁰ And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

¹¹ And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? Are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

¹² Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have a husband also to night, and should also bear sons;

¹³ Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? Would ye stay for them from having husbands? Nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me.

¹⁴ And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

¹⁵ And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.

Verse 8 – Naomi tells her daughters in law to go back. Thanks them.

Verse 9 – Wishes a blessing upon them and kisses them.

Verse 10 – They both (daughters) commit to following her to return to Judah.

Verse 11 – Naomi explains that logically, they should return because there is really no future for them with her. Interesting, have we ever had a Naomi season? Who are you in this story?

Three characters – Naomi, Orpah and Ruth

Everybody can't be Ruth at the same time.....there is a Naomi here somewhere.

Naomi is making the assumption they can't be helped where she is going. Looking at it in the natural. Tried to discourage them from following her. She is giving logical advice but not good spiritual counsel.

Verse 12-13 -- Looking at her current condition and circumstances...she feels she has nothing to offer them.

- Too old.
- Can't get another husband to produce another son to take care of them.
- Grieved that they have to suffer because of what God is doing against her. Incorrect, blaming God...He didn't tell them to move...they made these bad decisions...not God.
- Looking at things in the natural. Thinks she can't help them...but she has much more worth than she knows in her old age to help these two young people.....she knows how to get Judah.

Application for Today (Naomi):

- God still needs mentors. People who know how to get back to God and His best for their life. Naomi knows how to get back to Judah because she has been there before.
- She can provide significant spiritual mentoring for her daughters because she knows God and has heard the word.
- Are you a Naomi?

Verse 14 – Second character, Orpah....has a relationship with Naomi, feels bad, and leaves but Ruth is clinging to her. Orpah.....kisses or gives her lip service...but Ruth is committed.

Verse 15 – Orpah is headed back to what she used to know. There is now the temptation for Ruth to do the same. You will meet some Orpah's along the way. Everyone who starts out with you on this journey to position yourself for God's best will not be there in the end.

- May lose some things and some relationships along the way. Painful, some tears, but not critical to your better days.

Application for Today (Orpah):

- About Orpah – was headed in the right direction, started out okay but only got so far.
- Are you Orpah...just giving lip service, emotional, sincere...but not abiding like Ruth.
- Orpah moment, there for a minute but going back to your old self.
- Hardest thing for a Christian is not becoming one, but staying one.
- Loved Naomi, but not enough to walk with her....be careful we don't do this with Christ.
- Your future is not in your past.
- Any move that gets you closer to where God is moving is better than staying in your previous state far away from God.
- Are you like Orpah? You started out strong and headed in the right direction by faith, but find yourself always headed back in the wrong direction or going back to sin, the world, or self.
- You can never experience God's best by going back to the wrong situation and the wrong gods.

¹⁶ And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

¹⁷ Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.



18 When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

Verse 16 – Ruth had a serious relationship with her mentor. Often, there is a divine connection who will assist you in positioning you closer to God’s best. Someone God allows to be a part of our life who can show you the way to go.

- Get the right connection.
- Didn’t turn back like Orpah, committed to the journey.

Application for Today (Ruth):

- Many of us want and desire His best...but don’t stay committed to working toward it. Want good blood pressure but won’t eat right; want a great marriage but won’t act right.
- Ruth represents the sold out believer who by faith pursues God’s best and will not turn back or return to the bad place, bad situation that she just left.
- Don’t let logical thinking alone discourage you from continuing to serve God and pursue after Him. Keep following after the good news of the Gospel.

Verse 17 – Continues talking a good game.

Verse 18 – When Naomi saw Ruth wasn’t backing down, that her mind was made up....important...she had a made up mind. Then she stopped trying to convince her to go back.

19 So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

Verse 19 – they continued....staying on the path is a requirement to getting in position for God’s best. Keep moving until you get there...to the place where God has promised to bless. Made it to Bethlehem. City moved when they saw Naomi. They still recognized her.

Verse 20 – Wants to be called Mara = bitterness. The pity party has begun. This is not her best season...thinks better days are behind her due to all she has suffered.

Verse 21 – You might have to become empty before you can become exalted.



Verse 22 – Naomi....went out full, says she was returning empty, but she was wrong.....she had someone with her. Arrived at the beginning of barley harvest which would be near the time of Passover. That's the first step. Even though she had been away for a long time, she still arrived in time to participate in the harvest. Not disqualified.....may have missed some years but the opportunity still exists for her to receive His best.

- Wasn't the middle or the end but the beginning. Whenever you get there...it is the start of something great. Just get there.
- The beginning of this season....which means the best is yet to come. This was Passover time....there are is a greater harvest and better times designed after this. Best is in front of them.
- Barley was the first harvest; second one was wheat.
- Didn't have much to show for her time in Moab....but just because she planted in Moab, doesn't mean she can't reap in Bethlehem. You don't have to end up there...change your attitude and intentions.....not too late to change your mind.
- Wait.....if she went out full back then during the famine.....why did they leave? If they were rolling like that...why leave and go to Moab? They could have and should have stayed in Bethlehemjudah. Sometimes after we've gone through a hard time, we can look back and see it wasn't really that bad at first when you experience worse. Can call what you previously thought was a tough time or the famine a time when you were full. In comparison to what they came out of Moab with, they were full. You may not understand or appreciate it until after the loss.

Application for Today:

- Your previous mistakes do not disqualify you from receiving God's best.
- Whenever you decide to return to God and seek Him, it is always the beginning of your journey. You can still receive and enjoy His best for you.