

Ruth 1:1 NIV *In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. 2 The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there. 3 Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4 They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, 5 both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband. 6 When she heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. 7 With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah. 8 Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the LORD show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me. 9 May the LORD grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband." Then she kissed them and they wept aloud 10 and said to her, "We will go back with you to your people." 11 But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? 12 Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons— 13 would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD's hand has gone out against me!" 14 At this they wept again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her. 15 "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her." 16 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me." 18 When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her. 19 So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?" 20 "Don't call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. 21 I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me." 22 So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.*

Ruth 1:1 NIV *In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab.*

Much More than “once upon a time”

Central Importance: Describe the Setting for the Story...

Not some land, far, far away... begins in *Bethlehem in Judah*, Moves to Moab

“house granary of bread” HERE: No Rain = No Bread

Why no rain --- if this was the “hgob,” in t/ promised land, t/ place where God's covenant people lived? -----SKEPTIC: Ah ha, this is proof tt God is unfaithful --- Don't trust God, b/c at any moment He'll just drop you.

Setting:

Premonarchic Period: *In the days when the judges ruled:* following Joshua's death & b4 the crowning of Saul; A X when God sent judges (like local governors) to deliver His people from foreign oppressors.

People of Promise: ---not just 2 enjoy t/ rich blessings of God while they did their own thing b/c God would just look the other way. (Lev 26 & Deut 28)

Faithfulness is rooted in Gratitude.

God gives us so much 2b thankful 4... Yet, So Often We Can't See it b/c of our Fixation on things that don't go our way. Look 4 God's goodness in lil' blessings:

yesterday: 15-20 min's of sunshine chicks: Gr8 plans for tons of free eggs... 100s of \$\$\$ later, 1st eggs

He promised the Israelites: Follow me, Honor me, Put me first in your lives and I will bless:

Leviticus 26:11 NIV *I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you. 12 I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people. 13 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt so that you would no longer be slaves to the Egyptians; I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk with heads held high.*

If we're not Grateful to God, we're prone to Stray from God.

Gratitude ----Steers the Heart ----Steers the Feet.

We lose track of where we need to be when we forget How Good God has been to us.

= Sin = Pain...

God's Judgement 4 His Peeps often meant (&/or): 1 allowing enemies 2 pillage, destroy, conquer 2 w/holding rain

Leviticus 26:14 NIV "But if you will not listen to me and carry out all these commands, **15** and if you reject my decrees and abhor my laws and fail to carry out all my commands and so violate my covenant, **16** then I will do this to you: I will bring upon you sudden terror, wasting diseases and fever that will destroy your sight and drain away your life. You will plant seed in vain, because your enemies will eat it. **17** I will set my face against you so that you will be defeated by your enemies; those who hate you will rule over you, and you will flee even when no one is pursuing you. **18** "If after all this you will not listen to me, I will punish you for your sins seven times over. **19** I will break down your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze. **20** Your strength will be spent in vain, because your soil will not yield its crops, nor will the trees of the land yield their fruit. **21** "If you remain hostile toward me and refuse to listen to me, I will multiply your afflictions seven times over, as your sins deserve.

Judgement here = Famine Ruth 1:1b NIV ...and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab.

Doesn't Give Names Yet... Wants you to get the Context: Faithful God; Unfaithful People

Is God Still @ Work? Certainly. Sometimes God's Blessings are Found in His Judgements.

Ruth 1:2 NIV The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.

Elimelech: "My God is king" ---intended 2 express faith in God.

We're not told that Elimelech's departure was a point of sin against God, but gr8 emphasis is placed on His Place as One of God's Covenant People: **1b** a man from Bethlehem in Judah

2b ...They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem

They Never Intended to Stay in Moab...

- Wanted a Short Escape from the worst of the famine
- **NAS 1** (they) went to sojourn in the land of Moab
- **Isn't this true of Sin?**
- **We don't intend 2 stay there, 2 get stuck, 2 become bound... I'm just gonna try this ...**
 - I'm just going to look this one time.
 - Just one kiss.
 - Just one drink.
 - Just one time suppressing my values so everyone will like me.
 - Just one time cheating the boss, I mean I do so much for the company anyhow.

The famine was most likely localized to Israel & the result of God's Judgement of Israel's sin

What does God Desire When He allows us to Experience Pain b/c of Our Sin... to crush us?

-----No. He wants us to Repent.

& boom you like it & ur stuck

Too often we don't repent, b/c instead of listening to God's correction, we either:

(1) Make ourselves the Victim & whine a/b God's unfaithfulness

God doesn't love me, b/c if He did, He never would have let this happen to me

(2) Run to Fix the Consequences of Our Sin w/o Repenting of the Sin Itself.

this is Why So Many Marriages are Broken

- ☑ We're always looking to divert our attention away from the real issue instead of addressing the Core Problem: Sin.
- ☑ It's easier to Pamper Ourselves to divert our Attention than to face the Core Problem.
- ☑ It's easier to cast blame than to Look Inward & Own Up to My own Faults.
- ☑ This is Like Trying to Repair a Break In a Dam by throwing shovels of Dirt into the Raging Water ----- Need to Discover the Reason for the Break and then Develop a Blueprint for Repair

Perhaps Elimelech had Lost a Sense of Gratitude for All God Had Done for him

- One of God's Covenant People, Living in the Land of Promise
- Wonderful Wife
- 2 Great Sons
- Family Would do anything to follow him even to the land of Moab

I'm not saying this is true for Elimelech, but many times b/c we Forget God's Past Faithfulness, We Underestimate His Current & Future Faithfulness.

- Perhaps the Land of Moab Wasn't Going to Be the Place Elimelech thought it would be
- Maybe His Escape route Would Become His Trap
- Maybe He was taking a Journey Away from Gratitude & Trust in God and Embarking on a Journey of Self-Sustenance and Self-Determination.

13x the Writer Emphasizes God's Faithfulness in Verses 1-2.

Bethlehem (2x) Judah (2x)

Ephrathites (1) from Ephrathah ef-ra'-tha, the region surrounding Jerusalem

Elimelech (1) "My God is king"

mentions wife twice... (2)

Naomi (1) derived from a root word meaning "to be pleasant"

mentions sons twice (2) and gives their names, *Mahlon (1) Kilion (1)*

Sure there's a Famine Going On, but look @ the Great Things God's Given You

On a path that you're not so sure you like? ---look @ all the Great things God has Given U.

Moabites had Been Enemies of Israel. *Result of the Incestuous Relationship between Lot & his daughters (drunk for heirs)*

2c *And they went to Moab and lived there. 3 Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons.*

- "to be left over, to remain," after the death of someone close/needed
- often refers to those who have survived the wrath and judgment of God
- used to describe the death of the Pharaoh & his army in the Red Sea (Ex 14)
- Furthermore, to be buried in an unclean foreign land was considered the ultimate punishment

Nothing Good left for her, right?

Some of you feel there's nothing good left for you? *your health is gone. your wealth is gone. your friends are gone...* **But When All Seems Lost, there's always a Glimmer of Hope... Something for which we can Give Thanks...** *she was left with her two sons.*

4a *They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth.*

Two Common Hebrew words to describe marriage:

1) "to lift/carry a woman"

2) "to take a woman" more common for "to marry."

Here --- (1)... speaks of marriage by abduction (Like in Judg 21:23). Here, it would mean to marry outside the clan... later this came to mean such a marriage was illegitimate

Deut. 7 (NAS) 1 "When the Lord your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you, **2** and when the Lord your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them. **3** "Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. **4** "For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you.

Not a Call Against Interracial Marriage --- A specific call against being unequally yoked (marrying outside the faith)

Look what they were to do with the people in Canaan... (2). They didn't and === Trouble.

This is a CLEAR PICTURE FOR PARENT'S MODELING BEHAVIOR FOR THEIR KIDS.

Sin in our Hearts / Lives? We're to Destroy it.

• Don't and ==== Trouble.

Live in Gratitude + Live in Sin Doesn't Work... Doesn't Add Up.

10 years of Marriage & No Children... Oh, that's just a coincidence

OH REALLY? Fast forward & in her later marriage to Boaz, **Ruth 4:13** God Enabled her to conceive and she gave birth to a son

Come back to Chapter 1... The Here and Now...

4b ... After they had lived there about ten years, **5** both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

What a life of Doom & Gloom, Right?

How Could Naomi possibly have any reason to bring God praise?

There are times in life when we tend to Evaluate our Lives (in Quality, in Value):

- Milestones: Marriage, Years Old, Years of Marriage, Growth in Kids
- Crisis: Job Loss, Death of Loved One
- High School Reunions, Facebook

According to your focal point, you either have a lot to be thankful for or a lot to Desire.

In most stories of Gratitude, many times the formative thoughts are anything but thanks.

What about Naomi, would there be a better day?

6 When she heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there.

pāqad ---"to attend to, to visit," ---sometimes means "to intervene against, to punish,"

pāqad 'et, ---used here: "to intervene on behalf of, to come to the aid of."

- How has God come to your Aid?
- In What Way Has God come to your aid, giving you a 2nd Change, granting you grace, showing you a way out of a trap/bondage/sin?
- How will Your Attitude of Gratitude Cause you to focus on the God who's Come to your aid?
- How will this Focus result in Forward Movement, Strengthened Faith... Glory to His Name?