

Chesswood Baptist Church

Where Everybody is Somebody

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MINISTRY OF THE WORD

...IN THE DAYS WHEN THE JUDGES RULED, THAT THERE WAS A FAMINE IN THE LAND

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SCRIPTURE READING: **RUTH 1:1-6**

Ruth 1:1-2, 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 sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. **2:** And 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 Bethlehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

1. BACKGROUND

Refer to the Evening message August 11, 2019

2. INTRODUCTION

- a. As we approach the first chapter of the Book of Ruth, we find a man by the name of Elimelech who had a wife named Naomi and they were both Israelites.
- b. Elimelech encounters a famine in Bethlehem-judah as indicated in **Ruth 1:1** and he feels it necessary to move his family to Moab. *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 sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.*
- c. When we consider the situation, Bethlehem was where Jesus Christ was to be born and was the promise land that God had provided for the Jewish people. **1 Kings 11:36**, *And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.*
- d. A famine arose in the land and as a result he moved his family to a pagan country.
- e. This was a time when there was great rebellion with the Israelites called the Period of the Judges. **Judges 17:6**, *In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*
- f. Upon arrival in Moab, the two sons married Moabite girls. This broke the Mosaic Law according to **Deuteronomy 23:3**, *An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever: Their names were Orpah and Ruth who we will talk about in a moment.*
- g. Later, Elimelech dies and eventually his two sons also died leaving the three

women; Naomi, Ruth and Orpah.

- h. This is a beautiful love story that unfolds where after due consideration, Orpah decides to go back to her homeland of idolatry; whereas, Ruth decides to stay with Naomi and says, *"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:"*
- i. God indeed blesses Ruth because she eventually marries a very wealthy man named Boaz who served as a kinsmen redeemer.
- j. From that union, Obed was born who was the father of Jesse who in turn was the father of King David. This clearly places the Lord Jesus Christ in the line of David just as God said. **Matthew 1:1**, *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*
- k. With that introduction let's proceed into our verse by verse study of this marvelous book.

3. SIX POINTS TO THE MESSAGE

a. ...In the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land

1. **Ruth 1:1**, *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 sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.
2. This verse covers a multitude of things; first of all it indicates that it was a time when the judges ruled.
3. We know those times were dark days. Probably the darkest days in the whole history of the nation Israel.
4. If you recall, the Israelites had been in Egyptian captivity and God had redeemed them and brought them out by His power and blood. **Exodus 15:13**, *Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.*
5. **Nehemiah 1:10**, *Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.*
6. He brought them through the wilderness and many wandered there. There was a whole generation of the elders that were wiped out with the exception of Joshua and Caleb who bore an optimistic report that indicated they believed God. **Numbers 13:30**, *And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.*
7. God placed them in the Promise Land. You would think after arriving in this Promised Land they would serve God; however, they did not.
8. In the Book of Judges we see it was an awful story of how the people turned to idolatry from serving the true and living God.
9. Elimelech moved his family to Moab during the famine and I do not believe he was in God's will by doing so.
10. We have indicated several times before that people operate many times in the permissive will of God and not in God's perfect will. As an example, with respect to the Israelites God granted their request but there were consequences **Psalms 106:15**, *And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.*
11. When we operate in His permissive will there are difficulties and problems that will arise on every hand.

12. God intends for us to be obedient to the calling.
13. The only hope for America is for the churches to return to the Preserved Word of God, and for the people of God to stop compromising and be obedient to the will of God.
14. We know there will be a famine in the land for hearing the Word of God. **Amos 8:11**, *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:*
15. When we encounter difficulties as we work for God, we must remember that He has promised to never leave us nor forsake us. **Hebrews 13:5**, *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
16. I believe with all my heart Elimelech being in Bethlehem Judah was where God intended him to be.
17. The little town of Bethlehem, where the Lord Jesus Christ was to be born, placed Elimelech in the perfect will of God.
18. In order for us to understand what is written it is essential that we look at some meaning of names.
19. Bethlehem means a "house of bread."
20. Judah means "praise."
21. There is no question that he is in the house of bread and praise where the story begins.
22. Elimelech moves to Moab. God says in **Psalms 108:9**, *Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.*
23. Another phrase for washpot is the garbage can and he moves to an area of an outcast people; a people who are in gross idolatry.
24. What is there to do for these sons but to marry Moabites women?
25. It reminds us of the prodigal son who left the father's house but came to himself and returned. **Luke 15:17**, *And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!*
26. Elimelech leads this prodigal family over into the country of Moab.
27. As a matter of fact, when there was a famine he was frightened and he moved.
28. Scripture records a total of thirteen famines that God sent in the form of judgment. In each and every case, the people of God were frightened and failed to trust in Him. **1 John 4:18**, *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*
29. Failure to trust God and operate within His will, without a doubt, always brings disaster. God will chastise His own.
30. **Ruth 1:20-21**, *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?*
31. This says something to God's people; the minute we feel uncomfortable with something our first order of business is to move, however the Bible tells us to

stand fast.

32. **Philippians 4:1**, *Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. **Psalms 46:10**, Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*
33. Did God call you to the place you are now serving? If He did, we have no option to pick up and move.
34. Remember that the 13 famines are associated with God's judgment.
35. We call to remembrance father Abraham being frightened of a famine and as a result he sojourned to Egypt and God had to come and redeem him and his people. **Genesis 12:10**, *And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.*
36. These were dark days of the judges and gross rebellion was wide spread so God sent a famine in the land. **Judges 17:6**, *In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

b. And the name of man was Elimelech

1. **Ruth 1:2**, And 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.
2. The name Elimelech means "my God is King" or "the King is my God."
3. Here is a man who has a very meaningful name, but when a little bit of trouble comes, he does not live up to that testimony.
4. His wife's name was Naomi which means "pleasant."
5. She was apparently a very positive lady and lived on the sunny side of life. **Proverbs 17:22**, *A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.*
6. Regardless of the outlook, she was not one who was prone to complained or find fault.
7. It is amazing when we really know the Lord, we do not see things from a negative perspective.
8. **Philippians 4:4**, *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.*
9. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**, *Rejoice evermore. 17: Pray without ceasing. 18: In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning YOU.*
10. The Book of Joshua gives the believer a recipe for success. **Joshua 1:8**, *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.* Always remember that negativity does not allow us to move one inch toward success. It destroys five prime movers; relationships, energy supply, health, creativity and productivity.
11. Let's examine Mahlon and Chilion.
12. Mahlon means "unhealthy" and Chilion means "puny."
13. We can see Naomi, being as positive as she could, had two boys that were not 100% well, as a matter of fact, they both died at an early age.
14. *"And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there."* – When the

famine cleared up, Elimelech did not take his family back to where God had called him to be, but stayed there and as a result; these two boys married pagan wives.

c. And Elimelech Naomi's husband died

1. **Ruth 1:3, And Elimelech Naomi's husband died;** *and she was left, and her two sons.*
2. There is no question that when we are not in God's perfect will, there is trouble. **Job 14:1,** *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.*
3. We do know that this man was saved and born again, but we also know there is a sin unto death. **1 John 5:16,** *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.*
4. I am not saying he committed the sin unto death, but I do know there is a sin unto death that is committed by believers and it is for disobedience.
5. Remember Ananias and Sapphira who lied to the Holy Spirit and as a result death ensued. **Acts 5:3,** *But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? **Acts 5:5,** And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.*

d. And they took them wives of the women of Moab

1. **Ruth 1:4, And 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.*
2. This was in the tenth year. **Every minute** of that time was **outside of the will of God** and was subject to a time of chastisement.
3. There is a big difference between chastisement and persecution for righteousness sake and we need to know the difference.
4. Being outside of fellowship with God and going into a foreign country; the next step is always apostasy.
5. They are in Moab and there is apostasy.
6. Let's examine the names of the two girls as we continue to look at the Bible dictionary.
7. Orpah means "dear" or "fawn." It is possible she was an athletic type person.
8. Ruth on the other hand means "beauty" or "personality" which was characteristic of her.
9. In other words, the Lord Jesus Christ placing Ruth in His genealogy is an amazing thing. He truly came to save all of mankind, both Jew and Gentile if one will accept the simple plan of salvation and turn to Him.
10. Where there is obedience there is great rewards. **1 Samuel 15:22,** *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*
11. The reward bestowed upon Ruth is not something she had thought about, as a matter of fact; it was probably a total shock and surprise to her.

e. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them

1. **Ruth 1:5, And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them;** *and the woman was*

left of her two sons and her husband.

2. As indicated before according to their names, these two boys died and left the two girls with their mother in law.
3. I keep alluding to the fact that there was trouble and these folks were outside of God's will. It is necessary for me turn over and give you some indication as to why I feel that way.
4. **Ruth 1:21**, *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?*
5. This indicates that there was chastisement from God.
6. It is a dangerous thing to operate outside of God's will or in His permissive will.

f. Then she arose with her daughters in law

1. **Ruth 1:6**, *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.*
2. In the promised land, the famine was over; they just needed to stay in place and wait on God. **Isaiah 40:31**, *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*
3. He tells us in **Hebrews 13:5**, *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
4. He also tells us that He feeds the sparrows. **Matthew 10:31**, *Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.*
5. This prodigal family did not return as one unit, however, they did have sense enough to return to where God had originally placed them just as the prodigal son had sense enough to return to the father's house.
6. Things will never be right until they get back to where God had intended them to be; in Bethlehem.

4. CONCLUSION

- a. Do you know the Saviour?
- b. **John 3:16**, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
- c. A body has been prepared for the Lord Jesus Christ. **Hebrews 10:5**, *Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:*
- d. Sacrifice and offerings to God He did not want. All the animals in the Old Testament that were sacrificed was pointing to the time that the perfect Lamb of God would go to the cross and die for the sins of mankind. **John 1:29**, *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*
- e. It is faith in God that activates the process of salvation. We are saved by grace through faith. We are in Christ; His blood has cleansed us from all sin. **Hebrews 9:22**, *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.* Faith enables us to lay hold on the salvation plan that Jesus has given us.
- f. Trusting in Him as personal Saviour puts one in the body of Christ and we are

complete in Him. **Colossians 2:10**, *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 1 Corinthians 12:13*, *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 2 Corinthians 5:17*, *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

- g. It is **only** the Lord Jesus Christ who can save mankind. There are not six thousand ways to get to God; there is one way. **John 14:6**, *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*
- h. **Romans 3:23**, *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*
Romans 3:10, *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*
- i. **Romans 10:9-10**, *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*
- j. Please stand.

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