



LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH

#1. THE COVERING

This short history of the domestic affairs of one particular family fitly follows the book of Judges (the events related here happening in the days of the judges), and fitly goes before the books of Samuel, because in the close it introduces David. It relates not miracles nor laws, wars nor victories, nor the revolutions of states, but the affliction first and afterwards the comfort of Naomi, the conversion first and afterwards the preferment of Ruth. The design of this book is, I. To lead to providence, to show us how conversant it is about our private concerns. See 1 Samuel 2:7,8,Ps+113:7-9. II. To lead to Christ, who descended from Ruth, and part of whose genealogy concludes the book, whence it is fetched into Matthew 1:5. In the

conversion of Ruth the Moabitess, and the bringing of her into the pedigree of the Messiah, we have a type of the calling of the Gentiles in due time into the fellowship of Christ Jesus our Lord. The afflictions of Naomi and Ruth we have an account of, Ruth 1:1-22 Instances of their industry and humility, Ruth 2:1-23 The bringing of them into an alliance with Boaz, Ruth 3:1-18 And their happy settlement thereby, Ruth 4:1-22 And let us remember the scene is laid in Bethlehem, the city where our Redeemer was born.⁽¹⁾

1. DON'T LEAVE GOD'S COVERING

Ruth 1:1-5

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 dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons...

A. A LITTLE HISTORY...

- a) There was famine in God's country
 - ↻ Famine would imply that God was punishing the Israelites for their disobedience (Leviticus 26:19,20)
 - ↻ Note the last verse in the book of Judges... "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."
- b) Elimelech & his family were from Bethlehem (the house of bread), Judah (praise)
- c) They went back to Moab; the nation that descended from the son of Lot
- d) Tragedy struck. Elimelech died and Naomi's boys married local women. Ten years later, the sons died.

Have you ever wanted to run? I have; many times and I must say, that the times I gave in to the urge did not prove to be profitable! The book of Ruth opens with this type of dilemma. We read of a family that left home, but more than that, they left the covering of God in their home. You see, Judah was the land established by God through Abraham. They left Judah and went to Moab (about 48 km). Moab was a nation that descended from Lot's son; a son that was born through his eldest daughter (See Genesis 19:30-38). Are you getting the picture?

God plants us, establishes us and promises to take care of His own. We are to trust Him in the place that He leads us; He will make good on His Word. I can't help but think of Job when he cried out "Even though He (God) slay me, yet will I trust Him." (Job 13:15) The word 'trust' in the original text means to wait, hope, and expect.

I'm not trying to be harsh here with regards to Elimelech & Naomi. Who knows, maybe I would have done the same thing... it probably seemed a logical thing to do. But, that is not where my heart wants me to be! I want to live with a tenacity and determination that say, "I trust God". He will take care of me & our family because He said He would (Deuteronomy 7:8-9). This is the same spirit that we see in many of those that we look up to in scripture; Job, Abraham, Ruth, and yes... Naomi for she went back home.

1. Henry, Matthew. "Complete Commentary on Ruth ". "Matthew Henry Complete Commentary on the Whole Bible".
<<http://www.studydrive.org/com/mhc-com/view.cgi?book=ru&chapter=000>>. 1706.

"IT IS MY PRIVILEGE AND PREROGATIVE TO: GO WHERE I'M SENT, STAY WHERE I'M PUT, DO WHAT I'M TOLD, REPEAT WHAT I'VE HEARD, AND THEN LEAVE WHEN I'M DONE; AND GOD CHOOSES THAT MOMENT, NOT ME." ~PETER REID

B.

C. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

- ~ Don't leave the place that God has led you to, just because things aren't going the way you think they should. If you do, you leave His covering; His blessing.
- ~ God provides for us. He takes care of His own.
- ~ _____
- ~ _____

IS THERE A SITUATION IN YOUR OWN LIFE THAT THIS TRUTH IS SPEAKING TO?

PRAY. ENTRUST it to God. **ASK** for His strength, wisdom and continued protection. Ask Him to protect you from evil.

2. WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Just after we were married, Bruce & I had the opportunity to live in Israel for 8 months. One of the things that stood out to both of us while we were there was how aware people were of the meaning of their names. When we were introduced, they would often tell us their name along with the meaning of it, with great pride. It's like they viewed their names as a type of branding that indicated their destiny. It became significant to us at the time as we discovered that we were expecting our 1st child. We purposed from then on to find names for our children that had special meanings of God's blessing.

As I read the beginning of Ruth, it struck a curiosity in me when I looked up the meaning to both of the boy's names...

LOOK AT THE FOLLOWING MEANING OF THE NAMES IN THIS STORY. Write down the significance of each:

Bethlehem – house of bread (Ephrathite = fruitfulness) the name implies God's provision & deliverance. He would have satisfied their hunger if they had stayed. They left the house of bread.

Elimelech – my God is king _____

Naomi – my delight or pleasant, kindness, beauty, favour _____

Mahlon – sick, to become sick, diseased, weak _____

Chilion – pining, failing, consumption _____

Orpah – gazelle (from the root word oreph meaning ‘neck, back of the neck, back, back of the neck 1.of fleeing foe 2.of apostasy a.stiff of neck, obstinate) _____

Ruth – friendship (female companion, mate, neighbour woman) _____

Obed – serving _____

We had the privilege of going to India a few years ago. My husband assisted a local pastor there in baptizing a number of new Believers. With every baptism, they prayerfully gave each person a new name; a name specifically from the Bible. You see, many of them had been named after false gods of India and they wanted a new name that reflected their new birth.

D. LOOK UP THE FOLLOWING AND WRITE DOWN WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT YOUR NAME:

Isaiah 62:1-2: _____

Revelation 2:17: _____

Revelation 3:12: _____

My name (Wanda) means ‘wanderer’. That may not sound like much and can actually suggest a negative meaning in that I would not want to commit or settle down. Through the blood of Jesus though, I like to view my name to be ‘wanderer for Christ – willing to go wherever He would have me go’.

E. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

Find out what your name means. Maybe you'll want to 'redefine' its meaning through the blood of Jesus. You might want to pray about all of the names (small letter 'n') that you may have been called over the years that were not positive. Ask God to cover them and redeem them through the blood of Jesus. Ask Him to reveal to your spirit the name that He has given you and stand in confidence that you are now His child and bear His family name! (see Romans 8:15, 1 John 3:1)

F. SUMMARY

- ~ There really is something in a name.
- ~ Stay in the covering of God. Don't run from hard times. Persevere through faith in Christ knowing that God will see you through every circumstance. (Romans 5:2-4)

GOD'S MESSAGE TO HIS ANOINTED, "I'LL GO AHEAD OF YOU ... I'LL LEAD YOU TO BURIED TREASURES, SECRET CACHES OF VALUABLES—CONFIRMATIONS THAT IT IS, IN FACT, I, GOD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, WHO CALLS YOU BY YOUR NAME. (EXCERPTS FROM ISAIAH 45:1-3)