



LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH

## LESSON 2. THE RETURN

*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28*

## 1. SHE AROSE.

...So she might RETURN!

*Considering verse 21 where Naomi declares her state of emptiness and defeat, this is quite a significant thing for her to do. It's like a 2<sup>nd</sup> wind came into her as she made herself get up, pack up, and head back to where she belonged.*

## A LITTLE HEBREW LESSON...

Look at the Hebrew definition for the word 'arose' used in this verse:

- ~ to arise
- ~ to arise (hostile sense)
- ~ to arise, become powerful
- ~ to arise, come on the scene
- ~ to stand
- ~ to maintain oneself
- ~ to be established, be confirmed
- ~ to stand, endure
- ~ to be fixed
- ~ to be valid
- ~ to be proven
- ~ to be fulfilled
- ~ to persist
- ~ to be set, be fixed

*We can think as much as want to think about doing the right thing, but nothing changes until we actually 'do' what we are thinking about.*

## TAKE NOTE...

- a) Naomi positioned herself to be healed
- b) She heard what the Lord was doing and went toward Him
- c) Her returning took great courage, wisdom, determination & humility

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

Look up the following scriptures and write what they teach us:

- ~ Proverbs 22:17 (NKJV) \_\_\_\_\_
- ~ Isaiah 1:18-20 (AMP) \_\_\_\_\_
- ~ Matthew 11:28 (AMP) \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. HESED.

(Phonetic Checed, Kheh'sed meaning: goodness, kindness, faithfulness, loyalty, mercy & covenant faithfulness)

*Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. Ruth 1:8 (AMP)*

## "DEAL KINDLY" IS THE ANCIENT HEBREW WORD, HESED

### a) Naomi exhibits 'hesed' to her daughters in law:

- ↻ Naomi **petitions** her d-in-l to go back to their homes, their families, their community
- ↻ This really is common sense as Orpah & Ruth had stronger family ties in Moab than they did with Naomi
- ↻ We must understand that **community** in Bible times was a significant part of who they were. This was no small thing and Naomi knew that. She did not want them to make a decision based on emotions that would not have the conviction & stamina necessary to succeed in a new land.

### b) Naomi petitions them with blessing!

- ↻ What an incredible woman! Surely she did not really want to go back to Judah alone, but here she is thinking of the girls' well being more than her own

## HESED IS AN ATTRIBUTE OF GOD\*

Look up the following verses and write down the portion that describes the Hesed of God:

- ↻ Deuteronomy 7:9 \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- ↻ Genesis 24:27 \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- ↻ Exodus 15:13 \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- ↻ Exodus 34:6 \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalms 136 is all about the hesed of God: "for His mercy (hesed) endures forever."**

- a) In God's creative & sustaining work in nature (Ps. 136:1-9)
- b) In miraculous deliverance & intervention in history (Ps. 136:10-15)
- c) In His providential work through & for His people (Ps. 136:11-22)
- d) In His mercy, deliverance, provision & sovereignty (Ps. 136:23-26)

**In Psalm 107: 1, 8, 15, 21, 31, 43 the hesed of God is offered to:**

- a) the oppressed, the refugee, the hungry
- b) those whose sins have brought them hard circumstances
- c) those whose sins have brought emotion disturbance
- d) those without help in dangerous circumstances; in all ups and downs of life

*\*Taken from the lesson in ISOM Trimester 2, page 50, by Rev. Gornold Smith)*

## GOD IS LOOKING FOR THE SAME QUALITIES IN US

Write down your thoughts here. What are you already doing to exhibit the hesed of God in your life to others? What do you need to change?

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### 3. COVENANT (BERITH IN HEBREW; IT TIES PEOPLE TOGETHER & IS AN OATH WITH CONSEQUENCES)

*"A MORE PERFECT SURRENDER WAS NEVER MADE OF FRIENDLY FEELINGS TO A FRIEND"\**

Remember: Ruth's name means friendship. Reread Ruth 1:16-18

#### a) Orpah leaves

- ↻ With great emotion
- ↻ She has great love for Naomi, but unlike Naomi she does not act on her love
- ↻ ... Missed opportunity!

*THERE COMES A PLACE IN OUR FOLLOWING AFTER GOD WHERE IT COMES DOWN TO DOING. RUTH & ORPAH BOTH FELT THE SAME FEELING BUT RUTH DID DIFFERENTLY. SOME ARE CONTENT WITH FEELING CHRISTIAN FEELINGS – WITH FEELING A LOVE FOR GOD, WITH FEELING A LOVE FOR HIS WORD, WITH FEELING A LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE. BUT WHAT WILL YOU DO? WE ARE GLAD THAT GOD DIDN'T JUST FEEL HIS LOVE FOR US; INSTEAD, FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON. (JOHN 3:16)\**

\*<http://www.enduringword.com/commentaries/0801.htm>

#### b) Ruth's response to Naomi is in the language of a covenant

- ↻ May the Lord do so to me... is covenant language
- ↻ Covenant –
- ↻ We see Ruth operating in the Heseb of God again (faithfulness)
- ↻ Ruth had a healthy respect for her mother-in-law and was asking her not to urge her to leave. Her mind seems to be made up, but she wanted Naomi's blessing.

**Look at what the Adam Clarke Commentary suggests with regards to these verses:** (this is an excerpt taken from The Targum, an Aramaic translation of the Hebrew Bible. I am not suggesting that this is scriptural, but it is interesting as it reflects the Jewish culture...)

*The Targum adds several things to this conversation between Naomi and Ruth. I shall subjoin them: "And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee," for I desire to become a proselyte. And Naomi said, We are commanded to keep the Sabbath and other holy days; and on it not to travel more than two thousand cubits. And Ruth said, "Whither thou goest, I will go." And Naomi said, We are commanded not to lodge with the Gentiles. Ruth answered, "Where thou lodgest, I will lodge." And Naomi said, We are commanded to observe the one hundred and thirteen precepts. Ruth answered, What thy people observe, that will I observe; as if they had been my people of old. And Naomi said, We are commanded not to worship with any strange worship. Ruth answered, "Thy God shall be my God." Naomi said, We have four kinds of capital punishment for criminals; stoning, burning, beheading, and hanging. Ruth answered, "In whatsoever manner thou diest, I will die." Naomi said, We have a house of burial. Ruth answered, "And there will I be buried." The Adam Clarke Commentary is a derivative of an electronic edition prepared by GodRules.net.*

#### Naomi again displays great understanding & wisdom... she stops urging Ruth (vs. 18)

LITV – "...and she saw that she had made herself strong to go with her; and she ceased to speak to her."

- ↻ Are we a culture of covenant faithfulness? \_\_\_\_\_
- ↻ How can we be people who live with this attribute of God? \_\_\_\_\_

- ↻ Are you living a life that someone would want to follow ... such as Naomi? \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. FACING THE FACTS — TRUTH

| *I went out full and the Lord has brought me home again empty.*

**The two of them travelled until they came to Bethlehem.** This was a long trip on foot, most of it being up hill and through desert lands. It was around 48 KM and would have taken at least 12 hours to walk.

**a) She went out full**

- ↗ Husband, boys & possessions
- ↗ Everything important to her

**b) Came home empty**

- ↗ Broken spirit, no husband, no sons
- ↗ Humbled

**c) There were no defence mechanisms operating in Naomi**

- ↗ She recognized the hand of God & simply called things as they were
- ↗ She does not deny her circumstances

| *Denial is one of the most inhibiting factors to receiving healing.*

**d) The city is stirred upon their return**

- ↗ Bethlehem was a large village so everyone probably knew everyone
- ↗ Naomi was obviously well loved, missed and welcomed back instantly into the community
- ↗ Her reputation was a covering for Ruth, a foreigner

| *By Naomi's very choice to come home, she exhibits humility and the need for help. She comes to a place that will feed her and build her up again; God's land, the land of living bread!*

*"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.*

*Matthew 11:28-30 MSG*

NAOMI AND RUTH CAME BACK TO SPRING.

SPRING IS A TIME FOR NEW LIFE, NEW BEGINNINGS, AND NEW SEED BEING PLANTED.

AND I HEAR GOD SAYING: RETURN TO ME.