

Textual Reading and Music by Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington

Ruth 1:1-2

¹In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. ²The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there.

Ruth 1:3-5

³But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. ⁴These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, ⁵and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

Ruth 1:6-7

⁶Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the Lord had visited his people and given them food. ⁷So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.

Ruth 1:8-9

⁸But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "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. ⁹The Lord grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!"

Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

Ruth 1:10-13

¹⁰And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." ¹¹But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? ¹²Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband.

If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, ¹³would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me."

Ruth 1:14-15

¹⁴Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-inlaw, but Ruth clung to her. ¹⁵And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."

Ruth 1:16-17

¹⁶But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. ¹⁷Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."

Ruth 1:18

¹⁸And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.

Ruth 1:19-21

¹⁹So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, "Is this Naomi?" ²⁰She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. ²¹I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the Lord has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"

Ruth 1:22

²²So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.



a story of love, redemption, and faithfulness

The setting of the story...

Ruth 1:1-2

¹In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons.

"The days when the judges ruled"

Judges 6:1-6

¹Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites. ²Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds. ³Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country. ⁴They camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza and did not spare a living thing for Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys. ⁵They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count the men and their camels; they invaded the land to ravage it. ⁶Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the LORD for help.

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Judges 21:25

²⁵In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

The setting of the story...

Ruth 1:1-2

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How did the Moabites become a nation?

Genesis 19:30-38

³⁰Lot and his two daughters left Zoar and settled in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar. He and his two daughters lived in a cave. ³¹One day the older daughter said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man around here to lie with us, as is the custom all over the earth. ³²Let's get our father to drink wine and then lie with him and preserve our family line through our father." ³³That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and lay with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. ³⁴The next day the older daughter said to the younger, "Last night I lay with my father. Let's get him to drink wine again tonight, and you go in and lie with him so we can preserve our family line through our father." ³⁵So they got their father to drink wine that night also, and the younger daughter went and lay with him. Again he was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. ³⁶So both of Lot's daughters became pregnant by their father. ³⁷The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab; he is the father of the Moabites of today. ³⁸The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the Ammonites of today.

The setting of the story...

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The setting of the story...

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The taking of Moabite wives

Deuteronomy 7:1-4

¹When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you— ²and when the LORD your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy. ³Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, 4for they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD's anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you.

The decision to return to Bethelehm

Ruth 1:6-7

⁶Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the Lord had visited his people and given them food. ⁷So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.

Naomi's Release and Blessing

Ruth 1:8-9

⁸But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "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. ⁹The Lord grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!"

Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

The daughters' response

Ruth 1:10-13

¹⁰And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people."

Naomi's Plea for them to go away

Ruth 1:10-13

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If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, ¹³would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me."

Why wait for Naomi to get pregnant?

Why wait for Naomi to get pregnant?

Deuteronomy 25:5-10

⁵If brothers are living together and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother shall take her and marry her and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her. ⁶The first son she bears shall carry on the name of the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel. ⁷However, if a man does not want to marry his brother's wife, she shall go to the elders at the town gate and say, "My husband's brother refuses to carry on his brother's name in Israel. He will not fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to me." 8Then the elders of his town shall summon him and talk to him. If he persists in saying, "I do not want to marry her," ⁹his brother's widow shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, take off one of his sandals, spit in his face and say, "This is what is done to the man who will not build up his brother's family line." ¹⁰That man's line shall be known in Israel as The Family of the Unsandalled.

Two women, two responses

Ruth 1:14-15

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Ruth's Covenant

Ruth 1:16-17

¹⁶But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. ¹⁷Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."

Naomi relents

Ruth 1:18

¹⁸And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.

The Arrival at Bethlehem - a bitter old woman

Ruth 1:19-21

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