

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

Kindergarten

Sunday Morning

Study 27

Ruth

Ruth

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective The goal of this lesson is to demonstrate the importance of following God during difficult times through the story of Ruth.

Key Verses

Ruth 1-4

Matthew 1:5-16

Memory Verse - 1 John 2:15 (March Memory Verse)

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Hook

Ask for two volunteers. Have one of them hold somethings that would make it harder to perform simple tasks (e.g. an empty box, etc.) and then ask them to do a series of random tasks (touch their nose, touch their shoes, erase the board).

Just as it is much harder to do simple tasks when we have to hold physical burdens, it is harder to follow the Lord when life gets difficult. Today's story is about someone who faced several difficulties and had to choose whether or not to follow the Lord.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

The last 2 weeks, we have looked at stories that took place during the period of the judges, when almost all of Israel had wandered from the Lord. This week, we look at one family living in this period that was righteous, even when the world around them was wicked. The story began with a great famine in Israel. Naomi, her husband, and her two sons left Israel in the middle of the famine to go to Moab. While in Moab, both of Naomi's sons got married to Moabite women. One of them married Ruth, the main character of this story. Later, Naomi's husband and two sons died, leaving Naomi and her two daughters-in-law alone. Naomi gave Ruth the chance to stay in Moab and follow her own gods, but instead Ruth chose to go to Israel with Naomi and follow her God, the True God. She promised that Naomi's people would be her people and Naomi's God, her God. Once in Israel, Ruth met Boaz, a relative of Naomi's husband. He took care of Ruth, providing for her and Naomi grain from his field. Eventually, Ruth and Boaz fell in love, and so Boaz married her and took care of her. Eventually, Ruth and Boaz would give birth to a son, and later they became the great-grandparents of David, Israel's greatest king, and finally in Matthew 1 we discover that they were the ancestors of Jesus Himself.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

God brought so many wonderful things out of the marriage of Ruth and Boaz. He provided for two poor widows (Ruth and Naomi) and brought joy out of tragedy. He paved the way for the birth of David, the great and righteous king over all Israel. Best of all, he eventually used Ruth and Boaz to bring His Son Jesus into the world. Yet none of those things would have or could have happened if Ruth had not made one important decision: to stay with Naomi and follow the True and Living God.

Ruth and Naomi faced a tragic situation in Ruth 1. Their husbands had both died. Food was hard to come by. There was no one around to look out for them and take care of their needs. They were facing an incredibly difficult situation. In that situation, Ruth had a choice. Should go back to her old ways, her old gods, and her old friends, or she could go with Naomi back to Israel and follow her God. Ruth chose to stay with Naomi and follow the Lord. This was a decision of incredible faith. She had no family in Israel. She had no guarantee that anyone would take care of her, let alone that she would meet, fall in love with, and marry Boaz, yet she chose to follow the Lord.

LOOK (Continued)

We face all kinds of tragedies today, just like Ruth and Naomi. Parents, grandparents, friends, and relatives can get sick and die. Parents can get a divorce. Friends can move away. We can get really sick or injured. School can be tough. Friends can be unkind and let us down. When those things happen, we have the same choice Ruth had. It can be easy to think that the Lord doesn't care. After all, why would he let these things happen in the first place. But as we see, tragedy can be part of God's wonderful plan. If none of those bad things had never happened in Ruth's life, Jesus would not have been born. When bad things happen to us, it is important for us to trust God. He will take care of us. That does not mean that the bad things will always go away, but God uses tragedy to work in our lives. Suffering is often a way that God creates righteousness in our lives. Whenever you go through difficult circumstances, remember what God did for Ruth. He can do the same thing for us.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Review the lesson by asking the students what bad things happened to Ruth and Naomi. What choice did Ruth have to make, and how did God bless her for making that choice?

Pray: Thank the Lord for being good to us even when circumstances are difficult. Ask Him for help to follow Him even in the midst of our trials.

Parent Question: What good things did God do in Ruth's life because she chose to follow Him?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Ruth 1 by David Guzik

Ruth's Journey

A. Background: Elimelech and his sons.

1. (1) A sojourn in 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 dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons.

a. **In the days when the Judges ruled:** This account begins in the closing days of the Judges, a 400 year period of general anarchy and oppression when the Israelites were not ruled by kings, but by periodic deliverers whom God raised up when the nation sought Him again.

i. Notable among the Judges were Gideon, Samson, and Deborah. Each of these were raised up by God, not to rule as kings, but to lead Israel during a specific challenge, and then to go back to obscurity.

ii. The **days when the Judges ruled** were actually dark days for Israel; the period was characterized by the phrase *everyone did what was right in his own eyes* ([Judges 17:6](#), [18:1](#), [19:1](#), and [21:25](#)).

b. **A certain man of Bethlehem:** In these days, a man from **Bethlehem** left the land of Israel to **sojourn in the country of Moab**, because of famine. Bethlehem was a rich agricultural area (the city name means "House of Bread"), but times were tough, so he went to the pagan land of Moab.

i. To do so, he had to hike through the desolate Jericho pass, through the Judean wilderness near the Dead Sea, going across the Jordan River, into the land of Moab. This was a definite departure from the Promised Land of Israel, and a return towards the wilderness from which God had delivered Israel hundreds of years before. These were clearly steps in the *wrong* direction.

c. **A famine in the land:** God specifically promised there would always be plenty in the land if Israel was obedient. Therefore, **a famine in the land** meant that Israel, as a nation, was not obedient unto the LORD ([Deuteronomy 11:13-17](#)).

d. **Went to sojourn:** This means to leave with the intention to return. The next verse tells us the name of the man was *Elimelech* and his intention of short visit turned into ten, tragedy-filled years - and Elimelech never returned to Israel. The name *Elimelech* means "God is king" - but he didn't really live as if God was his king.

2. (2-5) Tragedy in Moab.

The name of the man *was* Elimelech, the name of his wife *was* Naomi, and the names of his two sons *were* Mahlon and Chilion; Ephraimites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there. Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one *was* Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years. Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

a. **Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died:** When Elimelech and his family came to Moab, they did not find life easier. Elimelech soon died, and his wife Naomi was left to care for their two boys, Mahlon and Chilion.

i. It is hard to say that this was the direct hand of God's judgment against them. It is sometimes difficult to discern why tragic things happen. What is certain is that the change of scenery didn't make things better.

ii. We sometimes think we can move away from our problems, but find we just bring them with us. No matter where you go, you bring yourself with you - so the same problems can continue in a different place.

b. **Now they took wives of the women of Moab:** Mahlon and Chilion grew, and took wives among the Moabite women, named Orpah

and Ruth. Again, this was not in obedience to God; God commanded the Israelites to not marry among the pagan nations surrounding them.

c. **Both Mahlon and Chilion died:** As time went on (**about ten years**) Naomi's sons died. So now there were three childless widows - Naomi and her two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth.

i. To be a childless widow was to be among the lowest, most disadvantaged classes in the ancient world. There was no one to support you, and you had to live on the generosity of strangers. Naomi had no family in Moab, and no one else to help her. It was a desperate situation.

B. The return to Judah.

1. (6-7) The three widows head back to Judah.

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 that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread. Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.

a. **She had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people:** From distant Moab, Naomi heard that God was doing good things back in Israel. She wanted to be part of the good things that God was doing.

i. Our life with God should make others want to come back to the LORD just by looking at our life. Our walk with the LORD should be something that makes others say, "I want some of that also!"

b. **She went out from the place where she was:** This set Naomi apart from many others people. Many hear of the good things God is doing in the lives of others, and only *wish* they could have some of it - instead of actually setting out to receive it. Naomi could have stayed in Moab all of her life wishing things were different, but she did something to receive what God had to give her.

2. (8-9) Naomi petitions her daughters-in-law to go back to Moab.

And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

a. **Go, return each to her mother's house:** By all common sense, this was the wise thing to do. Orpah and Ruth had stronger family ties in Moab than they did with Naomi, so it made sense for them to stay in Moab instead of going to a new land - Israel - with Naomi.

b. **The LORD deal kindly with you ... The LORD grant that you may find rest:** With these words Naomi freely blessed them. She prayed that they would remarry (**each in the house of her husband**).

i. **Deal kindly** is the ancient Hebrew word *hesed*. "*Hesed* encompasses deeds of mercy performed by a more powerful party for the benefit of the weaker one." (Huey)

ii. In [Ruth 1:9](#), Naomi described marriage as a place of **rest: The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband**. God intends that each marriage be a place and source, of rest, peace, and refreshment in life.

c. **She kissed them ... they lifted up their voices and wept:** This emotion shown is evidence of the real relationship of love between Naomi and her daughters-in-law.

3. (10-13) Naomi pleads with her daughters-in-law to stay in Moab.

And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? *Are* there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go; for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, *if* I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons, would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!"

a. **Are there still sons in my womb:** According to the laws of ancient Israel, if a young woman was left widowed, without having had a son, then one of her deceased husband's brothers was responsible for being a "surrogate father" and providing her with a son. Naomi here says that she has no other sons to give either Orpah or Ruth.

i. Trapp on **even if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons:** "Without having a husband, she doth not once think of

having children, as many wantons and light-skirts do; making themselves whores, and their children bastards, and all for satisfying the rage of present lust, though after they repent with grief and shame."

b. **The hand of the LORD has gone out against me:** This obviously weighed heavily on Naomi's heart and mind. She felt that the calamity which came upon her family came because they were disobedient, probably in leaving the Promised Land of Israel and marrying their sons to Moabite women.

i. Perhaps Naomi felt a particular guilt; perhaps she was the one who pushed to move out of Israel, and who pushed to marry off the sons.

c. **The hand of the LORD has gone out against me:** Despite this feeling, Naomi is going back to the land of Israel - and going back to her God. Though she felt that the **hand of the LORD has gone out against me**, she did not grow bitter against God. She returned to Him in repentance, knowing that the answer is drawing *closer to* Him, not going *further from* Him.

i. Naomi didn't accuse God of doing something wrong against her. She acknowledged His total control over all circumstances. It was actually an expression of trust in Him.

ii. If Naomi was bitter or angry against God, she probably would have gone another way - *further* from the God of Israel, rather than back to Him. Instead, she showed that she trusted the sovereignty of God, and knew that despite her personal calamities, He is a good God who blesses.

iii. What Naomi could not see is that the hand of the LORD would go out *for* her shortly! There is never reason for us to despair if we believe **the hand of the LORD has gone out against me**. If we will return to Him, His hand will go out *for us* again! Naomi had no idea - not the slightest - of how greatly God was going to bless her in a short time.

4. (14) Orpah stays in Moab; Ruth continues on with Naomi.

Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

a. **They lifted up their voices and wept again:** Both Orpah and Ruth felt deeply; both loved Naomi; both were anxious about the future. But a choice had to be made, and Orpah chose to stay in Moab, while Ruth **clung to** Naomi.

b. **Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her:** There comes a place in our following after God where it comes down to *doing*. Ruth and Orpah both felt the same feelings but Ruth *did* differently than Orpah.

i. 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 God that didn't just feel His love for us; instead, *For God so loved the world, He gave His only begotten Son.* ([John 3:16](#))

c. **Orpah kissed her mother-in-law:** What happened to Orpah? Of course, we don't know. But men have always concocted traditions to make up for what they don't know. Jewish traditions say this request of Naomi came four miles outside of Moab; and that Orpah shed only four tears over the thought of parting from her mother-in-law Naomi. But the rabbis go on to say that in recompense for the four miles that she went with Naomi, Orpah gave birth to four sons - Goliath and his three brothers.

5. (15-18) Ruth's eloquent statement of faith.

And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, *Or to* turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people *shall be* my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, if *anything but* death parts you and me." When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her.

a. **Look, your sister-in-law has gone:** Naomi did what she could to discourage Ruth from coming with her back to Israel. It wasn't that Naomi didn't want Ruth to come, but she didn't want a fair weather friend either.

b. **Wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people:** This was a noble - even outstanding - friend-to-friend commitment. But Ruth's commitment to Naomi went even further: **And your God, [will be] my God.**

i. This was more than change of address. Ruth was willing to forsake the Moabite gods she grew up with, and embrace the God of Israel. She was deciding to follow the LORD. This Gentile woman, once far from God, had drawn near to Him.

ii. **And your God, [will be] my God** meant that Naomi's relationship with God made an impact on Ruth. This is striking, because Naomi

did not have an easy life. She had been widowed, had lost both her sons, and believed that she had caused each calamity by her disobedience. Yet she still honored and loved the LORD.

iii. People should be able to look at your life, just as Ruth looked at Naomi's, and say "I want your God to be my God." Your trust in God, and turning towards Him in *tough* times, will often be the thing that draws others to the LORD.

c. **Your God, my God:** Ten years of Naomi's compromise in Moab never made Ruth confess her allegiance to the God of Israel. Yet as soon as Naomi stood and said, "I'm going back to the God of Israel, I'll put my fate in His hands" Ruth stood with her. If you think you will persuade your friends or relatives to Jesus by your compromise, you are mistaken. Perhaps you are sincere, but you are mistaken. Only a bold stand for Jesus will really do it.

i. "Ah! You will never win any soul to the right by a compromise with the wrong. It is decision for Christ and his truth that has the greatest power in the family, and the greatest power in the world, too." (Spurgeon)

d. **The LORD do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me:** Ruth had little knowledge of the true God, the God of Israel - but she knew He was a God of fairness and justice, so He could be called upon to hold Ruth accountable to this promise.

6. (19-21) Naomi and Ruth return to Bethlehem.

Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, *Is this Naomi?*" But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?"

a. **The two of them went until they came to Bethlehem:** It was a long walk from Moab to Bethlehem, and the trip was mostly uphill. We can imagine along the way, Ruth asking her mother-in-law Naomi all about the God of Israel and the land of Israel.

b. **All the city was excited because of them:** Bethlehem was just a large village; everyone in the village would have known everyone else, and remembered those who had left years ago.

c. **Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara:** The name **Naomi** means "pleasant"; the name **Mara** means "bitter." Naomi used this to tell the people of Bethlehem that her time away from Israel, her time away from the God of Israel, had not been pleasant - it was bitter.

i. Naomi wasn't a phony. She wasn't going to go home, pretend everything was fine, and be "pleasant." She was going to be honest, and say "Here I am and my life has been bitter."

d. **The Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me ... the LORD has brought me home again empty ... the LORD has testified against me:** Naomi was not afraid to see the hand of God in all her calamity.

i. Naomi knew that the tragedy that came into her life was not because of fate, chance, or blind fortune. She felt the tragedies were an example of God's affliction because she could not see the end of His plan. But she knew there was a sovereign God of heaven, and didn't think she had just run into a string of "bad luck."

ii. Yet, in the midst of all these bitter circumstances, Naomi was *not* bitter against the LORD. We can imagine one of the villagers asking, "Naomi, if God has dealt very bitterly with you, if the LORD has brought you home empty, if the LORD has testified against you, then why have you come back?" And she would have said, "Because I want to get right with Him again. Things have been terrible, and the answer isn't in going further from God, but in drawing closer to Him."

iii. Not every reacts to trials the way Naomi did. "Many are humbled, but not humble; low, but not lowly. These have lost the fruit of their afflictions ... and are therefore most miserable." (Trapp)

7. (22) **So Naomi returned ...**

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

a. **So Naomi returned:** Naomi came back repentant and honest. She has felt that *the Almighty has afflicted me*. But in the coming chapters, it will be shown the Almighty will bless her. If only she could see it!

b. **Now they came to Bethlehem:** It would have been easy for Naomi to focus on what she had lost. She had lost a husband, two sons, and

one daughter-in-law. She had lost all kinds of material possessions. All she had left was one daughter-in-law, Ruth. But through that one thing she had left, God was going to bring unbelievable blessing into her life.

i. All the good that happens in the future chapters begins her: With Naomi's godly repentance and honesty. It will make a difference not only in her life, but in the life of her daughter-in-law Ruth - and in the destiny of the nation Israel - and in your eternal salvation.

ii. It is possible for God to accomplish amazing things both for now and eternity, if we will turn towards Him today, not only in our feelings, but also in our actions.