





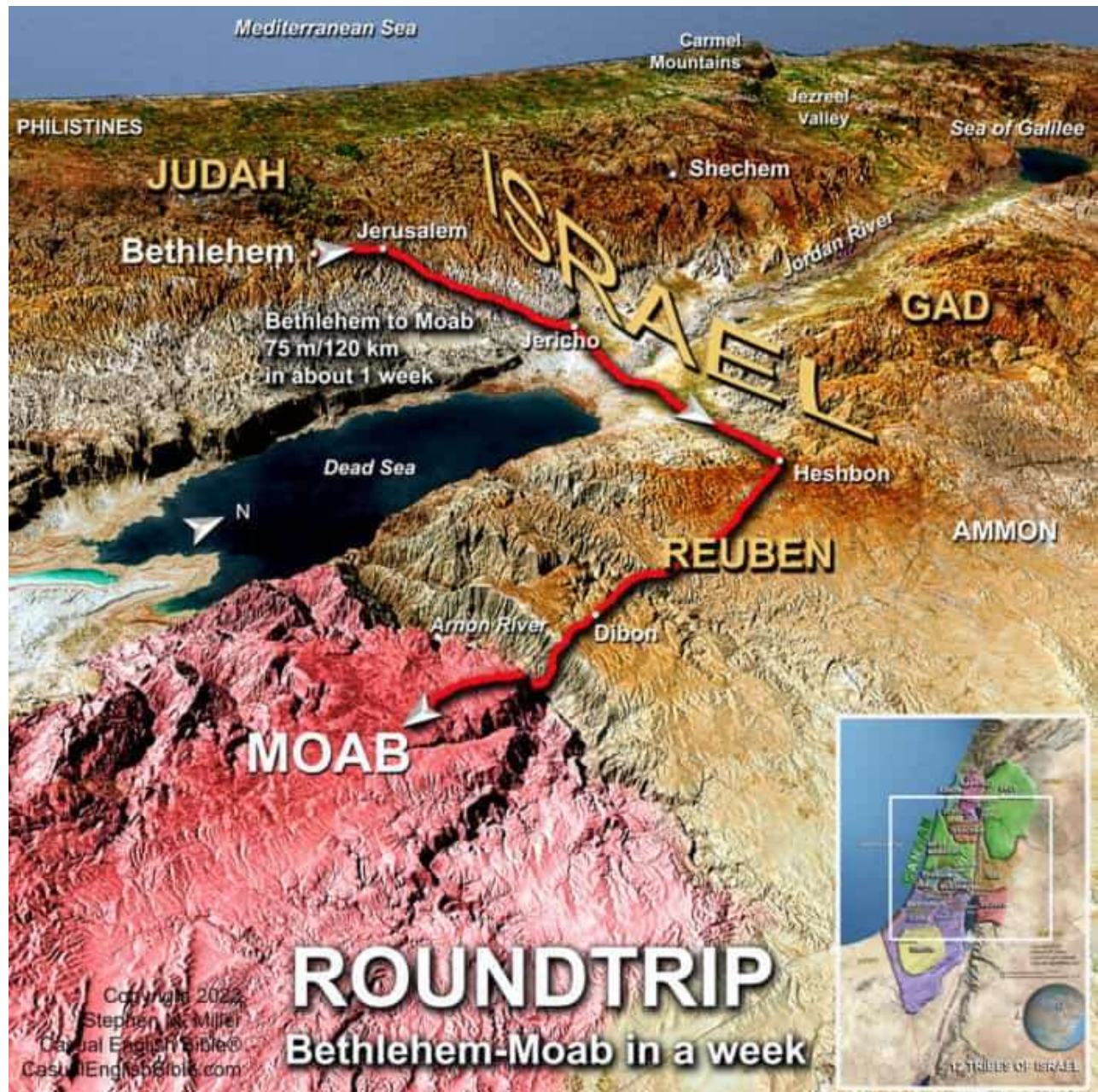



Day 1

-  Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.
-  Conventions used in these StudySheets:
- † “Christ Jesus:” we in the United States are traditionally given birth names with a first, middle, and surname (last-name or family-name). Back in the time of Jesus, people were called ‘first-name, son of father’s first-name’ (e.g., Jesus, son of Joseph). Because “Christ” is Jesus’ title, these StudySheets will frequently refer to Jesus as ‘Christ Jesus’. The purpose is to avoid the American naming convention that might indicate “Christ” is Jesus’ last name (surname). By the way the Apostle Paul seems to use Christ Jesus or Jesus Christ interchangeably.
 - † Pencil icon () indicates comments or notes; since commentary is not Holy Scripture, comments are purposely less prominent (i.e., font-size is smaller).
 - † Pronunciation helps: I have added some ‘helps’ to aid in pronouncing some of the more difficult names within the verses of this Book. While I am not attempting to provide a pronunciation key to the ancient dialect, I am hopeful the helps will provide a common pronunciation when reading some of these more unusual names.
-  The Godhead: The best analogy I have heard to describe the Godhead of God the Father, Christ Jesus the Son, and the Holy spirit is to envision a three-fingered hand (or a three-leaf clover). While each finger has a separate name, the three-fingers are all part of the same hand – the Godhead. The Jewish faith is unfalteringly monotheistic (belief in one God), so the concept of Christ Jesus the Son is blasphemous to them. The Book of Genesis is the first book in the Holy Bible and is the first book in what Judaism calls the Pentateuch, which refers to the first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). Within the pages of Genesis there are three different verses that refer to God by using the pronouns of “us” and “we”. Both words refer to two or more. That said, in his commentary on Genesis, Jewish Commentator Dennis Prager conveniently explained-away (or ignored) these words of “us” and “we” that are written in Genesis 1:26, 3:22, and 11:7 [©2019 by Dennis Prager, The Rational Bible Genesis, published by Regeneray Faith. Pages 24-25, 59, & 150].
-  Wrong teachings: We should be on-guard against wrong teachings. We do well to remember the praise recorded in Acts 17:11: “*Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*” The Bereans verified Paul’s preaching against the foundation of Scripture and found Paul’s teachings to be in harmony with what we now call the Old Testament. We, too, should verify sermons, teachings, and even these StudySheets against Scripture. The Holy Bible must be our rock, and our foundation of Biblical knowledge, of God’s character, of Jesus’ Gospel message and His servant-examples, of our behavior in the world, and of our interactions with other Believers.
-  False Teachings: If it takes a great deal of effort (i.e., convoluted explanation) to reach a certain Biblical conclusion, then it is probably false. I pray that this concept is readily apparent as you work through these StudySheet lessons. While the Bible is a wonderfully written, historical narrative, it also provides us with words that describe God: His character, His desire for all humanity, His [agapé love](#) for all, and His abhorrence of sin. By the way, sin is the barrier between God and humankind; Jesus destroys that barrier for those who believe in His saving grace – Jesus died for you, and for me. Praise God!!! Praise Jesus!!!

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22



 **Introduction.** In the last chapter (Ruth 4:13, 21-22) of this short four-chapter book, we learn that Ruth (a Gentile woman from the country of Moab) is the grandmother of David the baby boy who will be anointed King of Israel – King David. As we read in Matthew 1:5, Ruth is in the lineage of Jesus!

The narrative is silent on Ruth’s childhood, her upbringing, and her family’s (assumed) pagan worship. We can surmise that Naomi, Ruth’s mother-in-law, was well-informed in the oral traditions of her Jewish faith, because Naomi had a profound impact on both of her daughters-in-law, especially Ruth. Early in the story, Naomi decides to return to her hometown of Bethlehem. While one daughter-in-law chooses to remain in Moab with her family, the other Ruth chooses to remain with Naomi and accompany her on the return journey to Bethlehem.

One of the greatest pronouncements a person has said to another is the promise Ruth made to Naomi: “Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. [Ruth 1:16^b]”

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

The Book of Ruth begins with a severe famine in Judah. Commentators believe that Judah had been conquered and the invaders had devastated their food sources (crops and herds). Elimelech chooses to move his household, his wife Naomi and their two sons Mahlon and Kilion to Moab, to a region seemingly unaffected by the famine. They settled and made a life for themselves – work and a home. Life was better than it was in Bethlehem.

This was truly a patriarchal culture; the husband was the sole-source of income for the family and the property-owner. The husband's wife – women, in general – had few rights; and the husband typically made all major decisions for the family. The husband's wife (and daughters, if any) had much to do each day including grinding grain, finding fuel for the cooking fire, baking the day's bread (no refrigerators), clothes washing, walking to and from the community well to fill water jugs (no indoor plumbing), washing wool and spinning it into yarn, sewing clothes, nurturing their children, and the myriad other tasks required to maintain her household.


Then, Elimelech died. When Elimelech died, Elimelech's property rights flowed to his eldest son. The eldest son then became the 'master of the house' with all of the associated responsibilities; and he (and his brother) looked after and cared for their mother Naomi.

The boys became young men and eventually each son sought a wife; the sons married young women from Moab. Mahlon married Ruth (Ruth 4:10) and, therefore, Kilion married Orpah.

Life was good.

And then, both of Naomi's sons died . . .

Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab [Mōw-ăb].


Q1. What event caused a family to abandon friends, extended family, and livelihood to emigrate to a different country?

 Commentators have widely speculated about the approximate date of this famine event:

When the judges ruled: Literally, when the judges judged. This note of time is by no means definite. As we have seen, some have proposed to connect the famine with the ravages of the Midianites (Judges 6:1); or, supposing the genealogy to be complete (which is more likely, however, to be abridged, if at all, in the earlier generations), then since Boaz was the son of Salmon ([also known as] Salma, 1 Chronicles 2:11 ↓) and Rahab (Matthew 1:5 ↓), whom there can be no reasonable grounds for supposing to be other than the Rahab of Jericho, the events must be placed comparatively early in the period of the judges. [©about 1880, *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J. Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ruth/1-1.htm>]

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land: Namely, [*in the land*] of Israel. The non-specification of the particular country referred to is evidence that the writer was living in it, as one at home. . . Several expositors . . . would assign the famine to the period when the Midianites and Amalekites came up, "as grasshoppers [locusts] for multitude, to destroy the land," so that Israel was greatly impoverished (see Judges 6:1-6 ↓). But it is in vain to multiply guesses. The date of the famine is not given, and it is futile to make inquiry for it. [© 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2010: *The Pulpit Commentary*, Electronic Database by BibleSoft, Inc. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ruth/1-1.htm>]

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

 Through the following genealogies we can infer the timeline of events recorded in the Book of Ruth as they relate to the reign of King David.

1 Chronicles 2:11-12 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

¹¹ Nahshon was the father of Salmon. Salmon was the father of Boaz. ¹² Boaz was the father of Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse. [Jesse was the father of David.]

Matthew 1:5-6 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]


⁵ Salmon was the father of Boaz. (Boaz's mother was Rahab.)

Boaz was the father of Obed. (Obed's mother was Ruth.)

Obed was the father of Jesse.

⁶ Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon. (Solomon's mother had been Uriah's wife [Bathsheba].)

 It makes logical sense to this commentator that the events recorded in Judges 6:1-6 (↓) are those in which the invading Midianites, Amalekites, and other nations devastated Judah, using a "scorched earth" military strategy in which they destroyed crops (creating a famine) and seized herds and flocks (which in an agricultural society equated to wealth and food). It would have been a terrible time of famine and poverty for the surviving Jews.

In the first verse of Judges 6, we discover that the Jews had disobeyed God. God judged. From God's righteous judgment there was a consequence – a sentence – and the Jews suffered for their disobedience.

Throughout Jewish Old Testament history, the Jews continually repeat the historical cycle of disobedience to God: Israel disobeys, God patiently waits, Israel's disobedience reaches rock-bottom, God judges by allowing surrounding gentile nations to invade (and 'spank' His child), Israel is punished, Israel reaches a low-point in their punishment and despair, Israel finally remembers the Lord, repents, and cries-out for deliverance, and God relents, forgives, and restores them. Over and over and over. (Are we, today, any different from the Jews?)

Judges 6:1-6 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

¹ Again the people of Israel did what the Lord said was wrong. So, for seven years the Lord let the people of Midian rule Israel. ² The Midianites were very powerful and were cruel to the Israelites. So, the Israelites made hiding places in the mountains. They also hid in caves and safe places.

³ Whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites, Amalekites, and other peoples from the east would come and attack them. ⁴ These people camped in the land. And they destroyed the crops that the Israelites had planted. They did this as far as the land near Gaza. The people left nothing for Israel to eat. They left them no sheep, cattle, or donkeys.

⁵ The Midianites came up and camped in the land. They brought their tents and their animals with them. They were like swarms of locusts! There were so many people and camels they could not be counted. These people came into the land to ruin it. ⁶ Israel became very poor because of the Midianites. So, the Israelites cried out to the Lord for help.

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

²The man's name was Elimelech [Ĕ-līm-ĕ-lĕck], his wife's name Naomi [Nāy-ō-mī], and the names of his two sons were Mahlon [Māy-lōn] and Kilion [Kī-lī-ōn]. They were Ephrathites [Ĕff-rāh-thītes] from Bethlehem, [in] Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.

Q2. Were the people of Moab: Jews or Gentiles?

Jews? Gentiles? Thoughts?

Q3. Did Elimelech make a good, Godly decision, when he moved his family to Moab? Thoughts?

(Hint: do we think Elimelech sought God's wisdom through prayer? Or Scripture?)

Yes? } Thoughts?
No? }



Ephrathites: "The ancient name of Bethlehem was Ephrath (Genesis 35:19; 48:7), which was continued after the occupation of the land by the Hebrews, even down to the time of the prophet Micah (Micah 5:2 ↓). [©1882, *A Commentary, Critical, Practical, and Explanatory on the Old and New Testaments* by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ruth/1-2.htm>]

Micah 5:2 [NIV-1984]

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

Bethlehem [in] Judah: "so called to distinguish it from a town of the same name in Zebulun. The family, compelled to emigrate to Moab through pressure of a famine, settled for several years in that country. After the death of their father, the two sons married Moabite women. This was a violation of the Mosaic law (Deuteronomy 7:3 (↓); 23:3 (↓); Ezra 9:2 (↓); Nehemiah 13:23 ↓); and Jewish writers say that the early deaths of both the young men were divine judgments inflicted on them for those unlawful connections." [Ibid.]

Genesis 19:36-38 [The Message (MSG); a paraphrase]

[This passage answers the question: who founded Moab?]

³⁶ Both daughters became pregnant by their father, Lot. ³⁷ The older daughter had a son and named him Moab [Moab sounds like the Hebrew for 'from father'], the ancestor of the present-day Moabites. ³⁸ The younger daughter had a son and named him Ben-Ammi [Ben-Ammi means 'son of my father's people'], the ancestor of the present-day Ammonites.

Deuteronomy 2:9 [NIV-1984]

[This verse answers the question: why was Israel directed to ignore the Moabites?]

Then the Lord said to me, "Do not harass the Moabites or provoke them to war, for I will not give you any part of their land. I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession."



Comments for the Deuteronomy 2:9 passage (↑)

I have given Ar: "so the Moabites were [descended] . . . from Moab, a son of Lot by his firstborn daughter (Genesis 19:37 ↑). Ar was the metropolis of Moab, called Ar of Moab (Isaiah 15:1) and . . . [its usage in this verse refers to] the whole country of Moab . . . [as Commentator] Aben Ezra interprets it." [©about 1760, *Exposition of the Entire Bible* by John Gill. Text Courtesy of Internet Sacred Texts Archive. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/deuteronomy/2-9.htm>]

The descendants of Lot: "so called to signify that this preservation was not for their sakes, for they were a wicked people; but for Lot's sake, whose memory God yet honours." [© about 1667, *Commentary on the Holy Bible* by Matthew Poole; Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/deuteronomy/2-9.htm>]

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

Q4. What qualities does God most want from you and me that Elimelech failed to demonstrate?

(1) T ___ ___ T HIM [Hint: Exodus 14:31 (NIV or ICB); Elimelech: Deuteronomy 1:32 (NIV or ICB)]

(2) L ___ ___ HIM [Hint: Mark 12:33 (ESV, NIV, Phillips); or Romans 8:28 (NIV or ICB)]

(3) S ___ K HIM [Hint: Deuteronomy 4:29 (NIV); or 1 Chronicles 28:9 (ESV, NIV, MSG); or Psalm 119:2 (ESV, NIV)]

(4) Others?

Q5. In Old Testament history what happened to the Israelites when they associated with Moabites?

Numbers 25:1-3 [The Message (MSG); a paraphrase]

¹⁻³ While Israel was camped at Shittim (Acacia Grove), the men began to have sex with the Moabite women. It started when the women invited the men to their sex-and-religion worship. They ate together and then worshiped their gods. Israel ended up joining in the worship of the Baal of Peor. God was furious, his anger blazing out against Israel.

Q6. Did God allow or prohibit the Israelites from making treaties with the Moabites? Why? Or why not?

Allow? Prohibit? Why?

Deuteronomy 23:3-6 [NIV-2011]


³ No Ammonite or Moabite or any of their descendants may enter the assembly of the Lord, not even in the tenth generation. ⁴ For they did not come to meet you with bread and water on your way when you came out of Egypt, and they hired Balaam son of Beor from Pethor in Aram Naharaim [Northwest Mesopotamia] to pronounce a curse on you. ⁵ However, the Lord your God would not listen to Balaam but turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the Lord your God loves you. ⁶ Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them as long as you live.

Nehemiah 13:23-27 [The Message (MSG); a paraphrase]

²³⁻²⁷ Also in those days I saw Jews who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. Half the children couldn't even speak the language of Judah; all they knew was the language of Ashdod or some other tongue. So, I took those men to task, gave them a piece of my mind, even slapped some of them and jerked them by the hair. I made them swear to God: "Don't marry your daughters to their sons; and don't let their daughters marry your sons — and don't you yourselves marry them! Didn't Solomon the king of Israel sin because of women just like these? Even though there was no king quite like him, and God loved him and made him king over all Israel, foreign women were his downfall. Do you call this obedience — engaging in this extensive evil, showing yourselves faithless to God by marrying foreign wives?"

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

³ Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons.

Q7. Did God bless Elimelech's decision to move to Moab? Why? Or why not? Do we have any evidence? (Hint: did God judge?)

Was Elimelech's decision blessed? Yes? No? Why?

Evidence?

Q8. With the death of Naomi's husband, was Naomi's life easier or more difficult?

Easier? Difficult? Why?

Q9. Does God sometimes use these kinds of heart-wrenching, gut-wrenching events to shape our future decisions, to guide us?

Yes? }
No? } Why?

Any examples?

^{4a} They [Naomi's two sons] married Moabite [Mōw-ă-bīte] women, one named Orpah [Ore (rhymes with 'more')-pāh] and the other Ruth.


Q10. Based on Numbers 25:1-3 (↑), what result should occur from Jewish bachelors marrying Moabite women?

GOD'S J ____ T [Hint: 1 Chronicles 16:14 (ESV, NIV); Psalm 19:9 (ICB); Psalm 75:7 (ESV)]


Deuteronomy 7:3-4, 6 [NIV-1984]

³ Do not intermarry with them [Gentiles]. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, ⁴ for 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. . .

⁶ For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

 See also Deuteronomy 23:3-6 (↑): "treaty of friendship".

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

 A marriage vow is of greater import than a “treaty of friendship.” God prohibited the Jews from entering into a “treaty of friendship” with Ammonites and/or Moabites; therefore, God prohibits a Jew from marrying an Ammonite or Moabite – or any gentiles, generally speaking. (See Deuteronomy 7:3^a ↑)

Q11. For we Believers today, are there similar restrictions on whom we should marry?

2 Corinthians 7:14-15 [NIV-1984]

¹⁴ Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?

Ezra 9:1-3, 10-12 [NIV-1984]

[While Ezra was written about 350-300 B.C., which came well after the Book of Ruth was written, the basic principles for which Ezra laments were recorded in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament).]

¹ After these things had been done, the leaders came to me [the Prophet Ezra] and said, "The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. ² They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness."

³ When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard, and sat down appalled. . .

¹⁰ [Ezra prayed,] "But now, O our God, what can we say after this? For we have disregarded the commands ¹¹ you gave through your servants the prophets when you said: 'The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. ¹² Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance.' "

^{4b} After they had lived there about ten years, ⁵ both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

Q12. What would be the impact of Mahlon’s and Kilion’s deaths on Naomi and the young widows?


Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

Deuteronomy 25:5-6 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

[God gave Moses and the Jews a number of laws/rules to follow to make their culture, their society, better for all, with greater justice for all, than the surrounding pagan nations. The following is one rule given to help protect a widow's future, the few rights that she had, and her husband's name.]

⁵Two brothers might be living together. One of them might die without having a son. His widow must not marry someone outside her husband's family. Her husband's brother must marry her. This is his duty for her as a brother-in-law. ⁶The first son she has must be named for the dead brother. Then his name will not be forgotten in Israel.


Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

⁶When she heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home [to Bethlehem] from there [Moab].

Q13. Was it happenstance – luck – coincidence – that Naomi heard that the Lord had provided food to His people?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

 Co-incidence = God-incidence [Source: <https://www.tremain.us/> (upper righthand corner)]
“Coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous.” (attributed to Albert Einstein)

Exodus 4:29-31 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

[Comment to Exodus 4:31 (↓): God loved His chosen people, rescued them, and His people worshiped Him.]

²⁹So Moses and Aaron gathered all the elders of the Israelites. ³⁰Aaron told them everything that the Lord had told Moses. Then Moses did the miracles for all the people to see. ³¹So the Israelites believed. They heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their troubles. Then they bowed down and worshiped him.

Q14. What can be inferred about God's relationship with His chosen people? [See also Exodus 4:29-31 (↑)]

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

Q15. Would this be an easy journey for Naomi and Ruth?

Yes? } Thoughts?
No? }



Once before, when Elimelech, Naomi, and their sons travelled from Bethlehem to Moab, they made the difficult trek of about 75-miles. As Naomi trudged over the rugged and steep terrain in the company of her husband and two sons, she was protected and had help carrying her household items.

Now, Naomi was considering a return journey, with her two daughters-in-law. The journey would retrace her steps over the same rugged, dusty paths. She had to plan for the infrequent wells, little food, sore feet, barren ‘campsites’, and marauding bandits. This was a profound decision to be made with deliberation and planning – it was not made on a whim. Naomi could only carry so much from her home in Moab – of her life – tangible memories of her husband, her sons. She had to ask herself: What can I carry? What can I sell? What can I give away? And what, if anything, waited for her when she arrived in Bethlehem? This was truly a faith journey! A journey made with complete trust in Him.

At this point she was planning to return to Bethlehem accompanied by her two daughters-in-law. The three women would have to plan to carry food, a skin of water, extra clothing, perhaps a cooking pot, and other incidentals.

Q16. Why would the two daughters-in-law want to follow Naomi to a strange town far removed from the security and relationships of their parents and, presumably, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles – their girlhood home?



“Naomi began to think of returning, after the death of her two sons. When death comes into a family, it ought to reform what is amiss there. Earth is made bitter to us, that heaven may be made dear. Naomi seems to have been a person of faith and piety. [©1706, *Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Matthew Henry; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ruth/1-6.htm>]


Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

⁷With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah. ⁸Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the Lord show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me. ^{9a}May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband."

Q17. Why did Naomi encourage her daughters-in-law to return to their girlhood homes and not accompany her on her return to Bethlehem?


Q18. Could the verses of 8 & 9^a be considered a prayer?

Yes? } Thoughts?
No? }

 “[Naomi] dismissed her daughters-in-law with prayer. It is very proper for friends, when they part, to part [from] them . . . in love. Did Naomi do well, to discourage her daughters from going with her, when she might save them from the idolatry of Moab, and bring them to the faith and worship of the God of Israel? Naomi, no doubt, desired to do that; but if they went with her, she would not have them to go upon her account. Those [who] take upon them a profession of religion only to oblige their friends, or for the sake of company, will be converts of small value. If they did come with her, she would have them make it their deliberate choice, and sit down first and count the cost, as it concerns those to do who make a profession of religion. And more desire rest in the house of a husband, or some [worldly] settlement or earthly satisfaction, than the rest to which Christ invites our souls; therefore, when tried they will depart from Christ, though perhaps with some sorrow.” [©1706, *Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Matthew Henry; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ruth/1-6.htm>]

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

^{9b} Then she kissed them and they wept aloud ¹⁰ and said to her, "We will go back with you to your people."

¹¹ But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? ¹² Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me – even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons – ¹³ would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord 's hand has gone out against me!

Q19. Why did Naomi make the comment to her daughters-in-law about her giving birth to additional sons?

Deuteronomy 25:5-6 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

[This Deuteronomy passage also follows verse 5.]

⁵ Two brothers might be living together. One of them might die without having a son. His widow must not marry someone outside her husband's family. Her husband's brother must marry her. This is his duty for her as a brother-in-law. ⁶ The first son she has must be named for the dead brother. Then his name will not be forgotten in Israel.

Q20. This is wildly speculative: what is the age of Orpah and Ruth at this time in our story?

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22



William Blake. *Naomi Entreating Orpah and Ruth to Return to the Land of Moab*, 1795. Victoria and Albert Museum, London
The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York. https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/dinner_party/heritage_floor/naomi

¹⁴ At this they wept again. Then, Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.


¹⁵ "Look," said Naomi [to Ruth], "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."

Q21. Why did Ruth cling to Naomi?

Q22. What did Naomi mean when she said, "your sister-in-law is going back to . . . her gods"?

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹⁶ But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me."

Q23. Why do you think Ruth pledged such a deep conviction and commitment to Naomi?

Proverbs 22:6 [NIV-2011]

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

Q24. How did Ruth develop such a deeply rooted desire for Naomi's Lord?

Q25. Did Naomi carry with her from Bethlehem to Moab the oral Jewish traditions and stories? And did she share those with her daughters-in-law?

Naomi? Yes? No? Thoughts?

Were they shared? Yes? No? Thoughts?

Isaiah 56:6-8^a [International Children's Bible (ICB)] [Ruth is a 'foreigner', yet God embraces all who 'serve Him'! And verse 8a (↓) references the plight of Naomi and God's blessing upon her.]

⁶ Foreigners will join the Lord to serve him. They will worship and love him. They will worship him. They will obey the law about the Sabbath. They will keep the agreement with the Lord. ⁷ I will bring these people to my holy mountain. I will give them joy in my house of prayer. The offerings and sacrifices they place on my altar will please me. This is because my Temple will be called a house for prayer for people from all nations."

^{8a} The Lord gathers the Israelites who were forced to leave their country.

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

Acts 10:34-36 [The Message (MSG); a paraphrase]

³⁴⁻³⁶ [The Apostle] Peter fairly exploded with his good news: “It’s God’s own truth, nothing could be plainer: God plays no favorites! It makes no difference who you are or where you’re from — if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open. The Message he sent to the children of Israel [Jews] — that through Jesus Christ everything is being put together again — well, he’s doing it everywhere, among everyone [Gentiles].

Galatians 3:28-29 [J.B. Phillips New Testament (PHILLIPS); a paraphrase]

²⁶⁻²⁹ For now that you have faith in Christ you are all sons [and daughters] of God. All of you who were baptised “into” Christ have put on the family likeness of Christ. Gone is the distinction between Jew and Greek, slave and free man, male and female — you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, you are true descendants of Abraham, you are true heirs of His [God’s] promise.

¹⁸ When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

¹⁹ So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem.

When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?"

Q26. Naomi was recognized and welcomed. What might this tell us about Naomi’s relationship with the townspeople?

²⁰ "Don't call me Naomi, " she told them. "Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. ²¹ I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me."


Q27. While the name “Naomi” means pleasant and/or gentle in Hebrew, she is bitter. To whom is she bitter?

Lesson 1: Ruth 1:1-22

Q28. What error is Naomi making? (The New Testament clearly reveals how we should approach God in prayer.)

Philippians 4:6-7 [The Message (MSG); a paraphrase]


⁶ Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray, always give thanks. ⁷ And God's peace will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. The peace that God gives is so great that we cannot understand it.

 God does not want us to complain to others about our circumstances. He wants us to pray to Him, to talk to Him. God wants us to take everything to Him in prayer! Everything! Our doubts, our thanks, our troubles, our love, our misery, our successes, our sins, our gratitude, our supplications for others, and our complaints and grievances. He wants us to talk to Him. He wants to hear from us. When we whine to others about our circumstances, we are sharing our complaints with others who simply cannot address any of the issues; plus, their faith may waver because of our complaints – not good. And it tarnishes our relationship with God. Pray to Him! In everything!

Q29. Do you think she has temporarily forgotten about her devoted daughter-in-law?

Yes? }
No? } Why?

²² So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

 **Barley harvest:** “The barley harvest was the earliest (Exodus 9:31-32), and would ordinarily fall about the end of April.” [about 1880, Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, edited by Charles J. Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ruth/1-22.htm>]

Q30. What kind of spiritual influence did Naomi have upon her daughters-in-law, especially Ruth?

Q31. [Personal] What kind of spiritual influence do you have upon your children, grandchildren, and others?

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