

Timeline of Truth – Ruth 1:19-22 – Naomi Enters Bethlehem (with Ruth) Greeted But Grieved

<p>THEME (Overall Book Idea): God <i>always</i> rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - even when we cannot know what He is doing - even when it takes many years - even when God allows us to suffer 	<p>A rhyme that captures these ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - God is <i>always</i> in control Though we may be <i>unaware</i>. - And God may work over <i>many years</i> And allow troubles <i>hard</i> to bear. - But God is <i>always</i> in control We can <i>trust His loving care</i>.
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Two Memory Verses:

<p>4:14 Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel!"</p>	<p>4:17 Also the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.</p>
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Ruth 1:1-5 – Trouble Comes with Life

We are impacted by large-scale and personal apostasy, adversity, and tragedy, but God is always actively in control.

<p>¹ Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land.</p>	<p><i>In the days of horrific apostasy</i></p>
<p>³ Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; ... ⁵ Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died</p>	<p><i>They faced widespread adversity</i></p>
<p>³ Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; ... ⁵ Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died</p>	<p><i>Then they faced personal tragedy</i></p>

Ruth 1:5-7 – Naomi Makes Difficult Decisions (Another secondary lesson, but one that is evident here.)

We are to make wise decisions built from the truths of the Bible to honor God.

<p>⁵ Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.</p>	<p>1. Situation: Dangerous Destitution (aware of personal situation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prov 22:3a A prudent <i>man</i> foresees evil and hides himself...
<p>⁶ Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab,</p>	<p>2. Decision: Plan (decisiveness, make decisions, not sit as a victim)</p>
<p>for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread.</p>	<p>3. Reason: Provision (circumstances = hard decisions based on need vs flesh)</p>
<p>⁷ Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her;</p>	<p>4. Action: Departure (Acting on the decision)</p>
<p>and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.</p>	<p>5. Process: Journey (chosen paths may take time)</p>

Ruth 1:8-18 – Naomi Seeks to Provide a Better Future for Her Daughters-in-Law

God wants us to make significant, permanent, often costly life choices for Him.

<p>⁸ 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. ⁹ "The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them,</p>	<p>1. Naomi Directs Her Daughters-in-Law to Return Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision • Protection • Posterity
<p>and they lifted up their voices and wept. ¹⁰ And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people."</p>	<p>2. The Daughters-in-Law Respond</p>
<p>¹¹ 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? ¹² "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, ¹³ "would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands?"</p>	<p>3. Naomi Repeats the Direction with Explanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Question: <u>Why</u> will you go with me? b. Issue #1: <u>Ability</u> – Can Naomi still bear sons? c. Issue #2: <u>Age</u> – Is Naomi too old to marry? d. Issue #3: <u>Time</u> – Would you be able to wait?
<p>No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!"</p>	<p>4. Naomi Summarizes and Blames Herself</p>
<p>¹⁴ Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.</p>	<p>5. The Daughters-in-Law Respond Again</p>
<p>¹⁵ And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."</p>	<p>6. Naomi Encourages Ruth to Leave Like Orpah</p>
<p>¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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."</p>	<p>7. Ruth Fully Commits to Naomi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not ask me to leave • I embrace your journey, your home, your people, your God • I embrace the same place to die and to be buried • May the LORD kill me if I leave you by any means but death.
<p>Observations and Lessons:</p> <p>1) Naomi displays her loving care for her daughters-in-law, even after terrible circumstances and at the cost of her own personal provision and her only remaining loving relationships.</p>	<p>2) Naomi's influence is demonstrated in Ruth's response.</p> <p>3) There are different results for different people in the same circumstances.</p> <p>4) Decisions are still made by each individual person. Others cannot make life decisions for you.</p> <p>5) Ruth acts on her love for Naomi, even at the cost of her future pleasure, comfort, and posterity</p>
<p>¹⁸ When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her.</p>	<p>8. Naomi Accepts Ruth's Decision</p>

Naomi Enters Bethlehem (with Ruth) Greeted But Grieved (Ruth 1:19-22)

¹⁹ 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?" ²⁰ But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. ²¹ "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?" ²² 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.

1. They _____ (19a)

¹⁹ Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem.

- Their Identity – The Two of Them
- Their Destination – Bethlehem (Naomi's home) – At least 60-75 miles, 7-10 days (safety...)

2. Naomi Is _____ (19b)

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?"

- Her _____
 - All the city – All the city excited ("echoed with excitement")
 - Women said – Men would be working; women would know her better
- Their _____ – Is This Her?
 - Her Known Move Away
 - Her Extended Time Away
 - Her Present Situation (without known family)
 - Her Possible Change of Appearance

3. Naomi's _____ (20-21)

²⁰ But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.

²¹ "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 (Shaddai) has afflicted me?"

- She Objects to Her Name
 - Do not call me Naomi ("my delight" or "lovely")
 - Call me Mara ("bitterness") – in taste, in experience, in feeling

b. She Gives Her Reason

- For the Almighty
- Has dealt
- Bitterly with me

c. She Gives Her Explanation

- Went out full –
- Came back empty-handed

d. She Asks a Question

- Why do you call me lovely...
- ...when has testified against me (and found me guilty) - directly attributes her situation to God
- ...the Almighty has afflicted me – In a sense, questioning God's justice, and blaming Him for her circumstances (but also giving Him credit for eventual outcome of this account)
- "If Ruth modeled devotion, Naomi modeled utter honesty" (Hubbard, p. 127) and humanity

In emphatic syntactical position, *full* refers specifically to her happiness as wife of Elimelech and mother of Mahlon and Chilion. Her life laded nothing. Even the famine and migration drained no drops from that fullness; they were simply part of life, certainly nothing for which to blame God.

By giving Israel food, Yahweh initiated Naomi's "return"—but he also "caused her to return" empty.

It is theologically significant, however, that Naomi attributed nothing to chance but everything to Yahweh. In her view, there was no other force in the universe.

Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *The Book of Ruth*, *The New International Commentary on the OT*, pp. 125-126

4. Summary (22a)

²² So Naomi returned, and Ruth **the Moabitess** her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab.

- No details of place
- No details of Ruth

But one must avoid attributing Naomi's suffering to some heretofore unmentioned sin.... The narrator gives no grounds for doing so. Rather, Naomi's words point to the mysterious and often (from a human perspective) unjust workings of God. Finally, one must realize that her outburst in fact assumes a positive view of God, namely, that he controls the universe, normally with justice. Hubbard, p. 127

5. Their _____ (22b)

Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

- Where (hope)
- When (God's hand)

...the barley harvest began in late April or early May, the eighth month of the agricultural year. At that time, Israel brought the firstfruits as a consecration of the harvest (Lev. 23:10. The wheat harvest follows in about two weeks (cf. Ruth 2:23). Hubbard, p. 130