

Ruth 1:6-22
Repentance and Rest
November 25, 2007

I. Change of Scene and Circumstance (vv. 6-7)

A. The Return to Judah

1. Naomi arose and returned from Moab (singular verbs)
2. her daughters-in-law accompany her
3. tension: will they return with Naomi?

B. The Blessing of the Lord

1. The LORD visited His people
2. tension: will He visit Naomi?

II. Naomi's Bad Advice

A. First Attempt: return to your mother's house

1. may the LORD give you His steadfast love (covenant faithfulness)
2. may the LORD grant you rest
3. the implication: no steadfast love, no rest in Judah

B. Second attempt: hopelessness and bitterness in Judah

1. Naomi's seemingly sound advice (vv. 11-13a)
 - a. no husband = no rest or security
 - b. dead womb = no seed
 - c. first hint of Levirate marriage
2. Naomi's bitterness and faithlessness
Robert Hubbard, Jr.: "Ostensibly, the soliloquy is a passionate plea addressed to the women. In fact, however, it amounts to a lament accusing God of cruelly botching up her life."
 - a. selfish complaint – the hand of the LORD against me
 - b. faithlessness – no husband, no Redeemer in Judah

C. Two responses

1. Orpah's reasonable response – returns to Moab
2. Ruth's extraordinary response – clings to Naomi

III. Ruth's Faithful Confession

A. Naomi's third attempt (v. 15)

1. return with your sister
2. notice the horrible implications of Orpah's decision – she returns to her people and her gods

B. Ruth's striking confession (vv. 16-17)

1. loyalty to Naomi
2. reverses Orpah's decision
 - a. chooses the covenant people
 - b. chooses the covenant God

Matthew 10:37-39 ³⁷ *Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is*

not worthy of me. ³⁸ *And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.* ³⁹ *Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.*

3. buried in the land – the place of rest (v. 9)
4. claims the name of the LORD

C. Ruth's covenant commitment and covenant loyalty

1. she clings to Naomi (Gen. 2:24)
2. makes her dwelling with God and His people
Ruth 2:12 The LORD repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"
3. what a rebuke in light of Naomi's bitterness

D. Ruth becomes the center of our story

1. her conversion, her return opens the way to blessing
2. her fruitfulness opens the womb of Naomi
3. her marriage brings the return of Naomi's inheritance

IV. The End of Our Scene (vv. 18-22)

A. Naomi's response

1. her shocking silence toward Ruth (v. 18)
Literally → When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped talking to her.
2. her remaining bitterness – Naomi (pleasant) to Mara (bitter)
Exodus 15:23-24 ²³ *When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah.* ²⁴ *And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"*
3. her version of reality
 - a. went away full?
 - b. came back empty? (4:14)
 - c. Jim Jordan: "the whole family has been characterized by food and not faith"
John 6:26-27 ²⁶ *Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.* ²⁷ *Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."*

B. Naomi's response

1. Naomi returned with Ruth
2. Ruth the Moabite returned from Moab
 - a. emphasized the foreigner
 - b. she returned (or turned away) from Moab
3. reversal of circumstance in Bethlehem
 - a. 1:1 there was a famine in the land
 - b. 1:22 they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest