

Ruth

(2) The Story Unfolds

Ruth 1:3-7, NIV

Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4 They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. 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.

6 When 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 from there.

The life of disobedience...1:3-15

After Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, what did Naomi allow? 1:3

Her only two sons were allowed to marry two Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth.

What had God required of the Jews in this regard? Deut.23:3-6; Ezra 9:1-4

This is blatant rejection of the Lord's will. Naomi supported her sons' lack of faith.

What was the history of such disobedience re the 'daughters of Moab'? Num.25:1-9

The idolatry of the Moabites was very deep and seductive. The Lord's wrath broke out.

What is the warning in all of this to us today? II Cor.6:14-18

Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. In the world, not of the world.

Backslidden Naomi, now alone, in desperation finally does what...? 1:6-7 Motive??

Hearing of the Lord's blessing on Israel (no famine now) makes plans to return/Bethlehem

What is likely the reason for Naomi's action in verse 8-15? 1:8-15 note vs.15!

Stigma of returning w/Moabites and no real concern for them. Go back to your idols!

What does this tell us about the spiritual state of Naomi? 1:13b; 1:20-21 see Num.10:29

She is bitter against God. Unwilling to confess her sin(s). Sees no benefits to being His.

What's one lesson for us? Ps.66:18; Prov.28:13; Ps.51:17; IJn.1:9

God demands His children to be clean/obedient. Refusal brings grief and discipline!

God's grace on display...1:16-22

From her reply in vs.16, what has clearly happened to Ruth? 1:16; Eph.2:8-9, **12** Us!

Raised in idolatry, surrounded by bad examples, urged to go back, yet she has faith!

Seeing the determination of Ruth, what does Naomi do? 1:17-19

She gives up trying to send her back and both of them travel on to Bethlehem.

What is (backslidden) Naomi's testimony to her friends/family in Israel? 1:19-21

Don't call me 'blessed', call me 'bitter'. And it's the Almighty who had done this!

What's the summary of the story up to this point? 1:22

Naomi has returned (bitter, hurting) with Ruth, the Moabitess at barley harvest time.