



# **COURAGE**

**LIVING FOR GOD IN DIFFICULT TIMES**

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from your EFG  
leader)**

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## Study 1 – Ruth (circa 1100BC)

Ruth 1-4

## Ruth 1:1-5

*<sup>1</sup> In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. <sup>2</sup> The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. <sup>3</sup> But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup> These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, <sup>5</sup> and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.*

# 1. Ruth lived in difficult times

## Ruth 1:1

*<sup>1</sup> In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons.*

# 1. Ruth lived in difficult times

## Ruth 1:1

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## Judges (21:25)

*In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

# 1. Ruth lived in difficult times

- Israel had no King (v1, cf. Judges 21:25)
- There was a famine in the land (v1)
- Naomi's husband dies (v3)
- Ruth & Orpah's husbands die (v5)
- Naomi is left without any children
- Ruth & Orpah left without husbands or children

## Ruth 1:6-14

*<sup>6</sup> Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. <sup>7</sup> So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. <sup>8</sup> But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. <sup>9</sup> The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.*



## Ruth 1:6-14

*<sup>10</sup> And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." <sup>11</sup> But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? <sup>12</sup> Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, <sup>13</sup> would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me." <sup>14</sup> Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.*

## 2. Displays of human kindness & courage in difficult times

### - Naomi's Kindness (Ruth 1:8-9)

<sup>8</sup> But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. <sup>9</sup> The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!” Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

## 2. Displays of human kindness & courage in difficult times

Naomi's Kindness (Ruth 1:8-9)

**Ruth & Orpah were disadvantaged in every way that mattered.**

- They were foreigners/outsideers, scorned & hated
- They would have lived in fear of assault
- They were widowed, childless, powerless & poor

**Naomi prays for them & releases them to return home to their families.**

## **Ruth 1:14-19**

*And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.*

*<sup>15</sup> And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." <sup>16</sup> But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. <sup>17</sup> Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you." <sup>18</sup> And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.*

*<sup>19</sup> So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem.*

## 2. Displays of human kindness & courage in difficult times

### - Ruth's Kindness & Courage (Ruth 1:14, 16-17)

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*<sup>16</sup> But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. <sup>17</sup> Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."*

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### **Ruth's Kindness & Courage (Ruth 1:14, 16-17)**

- Ruth chose to remain even though she would be potentially worse off than if she stayed
- Ruth's kindness & courage anchored in her relationship with God (v.17)

*"May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."*

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### **Ruth's Kindness & Courage (Ruth 1:14, 16-17)**

- Ruth chose to remain even though she would be potentially worse off than if she stayed
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*"...for your daughter-in-law who loves you"*

## 2. Displays of human kindness & courage in difficult times

### **Ruth's Kindness & Courage (Ruth 1:14, 16-17)**

- Ruth chose to remain even though she would be potentially worse off than if she stayed
- Ruth's kindness & courage anchored in her relationship with God (v.17) & with Naomi (4:15)
- Ruth makes the hard choice to do the right thing



# 3. God's kindness on display

## Ruth chapter 2 & 3:15-17

- God provides food for them through Boaz

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*"When you harvest the crops of your land, **do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields**, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. **Leave it for the poor and the foreigners living among you.** I am the LORD your God."*

*Lev 23:22 (NLT)*

# 3. God's kindness on display

## Ruth chapter 2 & 3:15-17

- God provides food for them through Boaz
- Boaz notices Ruth (2:5-7)

*"Whose young woman is this?"<sup>6</sup> And the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, "She is the young Moabite woman, who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab.<sup>7</sup> She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the reapers.' So she came, and she has continued from early morning until now, except for a short rest."*

# 3. God's kindness on display

## Ruth chapter 2 & 3:15-17

### - Boaz ensures Ruth's safety (2:8-9)

*<sup>8</sup> Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now, listen, my daughter, **do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women.** <sup>9</sup> Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping, and go after them. **Have I not charged the young men not to touch you?** And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn."*

# 3. God's kindness on display

## Ruth chapter 2 & 3:15-17

### - Boaz abundant generosity (2:14-16)

*<sup>14</sup> And at mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here and eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed to her roasted grain. And she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. <sup>15</sup> When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. <sup>16</sup> And also pull out some from the bundles for her and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her."*

# 3. God's kindness on display

## Ruth chapter 2 & 3:15-17

God provides food for them through Boaz

- Boaz notices Ruth (2:5-7)
- Boaz ensures Ruth's safety (2:8-9)
- Boaz is abundantly generous (2:14-16)

Ruth takes home plenty of barley & left over dinner. Naomi is excited to learn it was Boaz!

# 3. God's kindness on display

## Ruth chapter 2 & 3:15-17

- God provides food for them through Boaz
- Ruth takes home plenty of barley & left over dinner. Naomi is excited to learn it was Boaz!
- Naomi recognises God's provision (2:20)

*<sup>20</sup> And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!"*

## Ruth 3:1-4

*<sup>1</sup> Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you? <sup>2</sup> Is not Boaz our relative, with whose young women you were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. <sup>3</sup> Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. <sup>4</sup> But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he will tell you what to do."*



*<sup>8</sup> At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! <sup>9</sup> He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer." <sup>10</sup> And he said, "May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. <sup>11</sup> And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. <sup>12</sup> And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. <sup>13</sup> Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the LORD lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning."*

*14 So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." 15 And he said, "Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city. 16 And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you fare, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her, 17 saying, "These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, 'You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'" 18 She replied, "Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today."*

## **4. A future hope through a kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 3:1-18)**

- Naomi hoped to secure a husband for Ruth & a future for their family
- Jewish law provided for the protection of families through a kinsman-redeemer (Lev 25, Num 35)
- The redeemer paid the debt incurred by the family and provided protection for the family by ensuring the family name would continue

## Ruth 4:13-17

*<sup>13</sup> So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. <sup>14</sup> Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! <sup>15</sup> He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him." <sup>16</sup> Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. <sup>17</sup> And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.*

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## Ruth 1:19-21

*And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, "Is this Naomi?"<sup>20</sup> She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.<sup>21</sup> I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. **Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"***

# SO WHAT? LESSONS FROM RUTH

What is our heart towards others in difficulty?

- *Kindness, courage & generosity should be our response.*
- *God has shown immeasurable kindness to us in Jesus.*

What is our heart towards God in difficulty?

- *We should trust God to work in all things. For our good and His glory!*

## James 1:2-4 (NLT)

<sup>2</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, *when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.* <sup>3</sup> For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. <sup>4</sup> So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

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What is our heart towards discipleship?

- *We should be willing to obey the commands of Jesus even when it is difficult!*