

**Ruth 1:6 – 13**

English Standard Version (ESV)

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

14 <sup>6</sup> Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the  
 15 country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that  
 16 the LORD had visited his people and given them food. <sup>7</sup> So she  
 17 set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-  
 18 in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of  
 19 Judah. <sup>8</sup> But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go,  
 20 return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal  
 21 kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me.  
 22 <sup>9</sup> The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the  
 23 house of her husband!” Then she kissed them, and they lifted  
 24 up their voices and wept. <sup>10</sup> And they said to her, “No, we will  
 25 return with you to your people.” <sup>11</sup> But Naomi said, “Turn  
 26 back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet  
 27 sons in my womb that they may become your husbands?  
 28 <sup>12</sup> Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to  
 29 have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should  
 30 have a husband this night and should bear sons, <sup>13</sup> would you  
 31 therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore  
 32 refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is  
 33 exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the  
 34 LORD has gone out against me.”

**Review the passage from last week, then continue in the story.**

**Observation (What does it say?):**

Consider the observation questions on the back of this page. What do you notice in this passage?

- Underline Naomi's statements to her daughters-in-law.
- Circle Naomi's statements about God (“the LORD”).
- Notice any:
  - Repeated words or phrases
  - Comparisons or contrasts
  - Purpose or explanation
  - Unusual or symbolic language
- Other observations you see?

**Interpretation (What does it mean?):**

After observing the passage:

- Describe the changes in Naomi's statements to Orpah and Ruth.
- Describe the changes in Naomi's statements about God.
- What are Naomi's expectations from God for her daughters-in-law and for herself?
- What parts of Naomi's statements to Orpah and Ruth seem very odd to our culture? Read Deuteronomy 25:5-6 on the back page. How does that help understand Naomi's concern?
- What would you imagine is happening in Naomi in this short passage?

**Application (What does it mean for me?):**

- How do you tend to respond to crushing circumstances? Have you ever experienced Naomi's level of despair?
- Do your circumstances affect your view of God, or does your view of God affect how you see your circumstances? How could you grow in dealing with difficult circumstances?

**Additional material for thought and discussion:**

Deuteronomy 25:5-6

<sup>5</sup> “If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. <sup>6</sup> And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.

## Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

### Observation (What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer's thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose (“in order that...”)?
- Are there conclusions (“Therefore...”)?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good “headline” for the passage?

### Interpretation (What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer's thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

### Application (What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.**  
J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)