

LESSON 1: OUT OF THE FRYING PAN & INTO THE FIRE

Intro:

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. ²The 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. ³But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. ⁴These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, ⁵and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband. **Ruth 1**

When: “when the judges ruled”

Pattern of Judges

A- _____

B- _____

C- _____

D- _____

Theme of Judges

²⁵In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. **Judges 21** (cf. 17:6; 18:1; 19:1)

In the Hebrew Bible, Ruth follows _____ with the idea that she is a valiant woman (Prov. 31).

Why: “there was a _____ in the land”

One of God’s judgments for persistent disobedience (Deut. 28:15-16; 32:23-24).

Bethlehem- “house of _____”

The town was known for wheat, barley, olives, almonds, and grapes.¹

Famines often resulted in migration (Gen. 12:10ff; 26:1ff; 45:11ff).

¹ Hubbard, Jr. Robert L. *The Book of Ruth* (NICOT). Grand Rapids, Eerdmans. 1988. pp. 85.

“When there are no supermarkets, a lean harvest can devastate a community.” **Dean Ulrich**²

Israel, after the Exodus, returned to the Promised Land to stay. Yet...

“went to sojourn in the country of _____”

- To sojourn is to abide, remain, inhabit, live as a _____. They were resident _____, a protected status.
- Instead of _____ to God, this family _____ from the Promised Land.

“But for Naomi and her family, emigration involves turning their backs upon the Lord’s word and his summons to repentance.” **Sinclair Ferguson**³

Their History with Moab

Genesis 19

Numbers 22

Num. 23 cf. Deut. 23:1-5

¹⁷I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near:
a star shall come out of Jacob,
and a scepter shall rise out of Israel;
it shall crush the forehead of Moab
and break down all the sons of Sheth. **Numbers 24**

Numbers 31:16; Rev. 2:14

Numbers 25

Numbers 31

² Ulrich, Dean. *From Famine to Fullness: The Gospel According to Ruth*. Philipsburg, P&R Publishing. 2007. pp. 20.

³ Ferguson, Sinclair. *Faithful God: An Exposition on the Book of Ruth*. Bridgend, Bryntirion Press. 2005. pp. 29.

Deuteronomy 2:9

Deuteronomy 23:3

Baal Peor- Baal was a _____ god and a _____ god among the Canaanites. Peor is a mountain in _____. Baal was El's " _____ " but eventually overthrew him. In worship they imitated the gods.⁴

Chemosh- he was their _____ god (Ammonites too) and probably had Astarte as a cult partner. The Moabite Stone claims he brought them to victory when they finally defeated Judah⁵ to cease being their vassals. His name probably means " _____," _____," or "fish god."⁶ Worship of Chemosh most likely involved _____, and possibly child sacrifice.

Judges 3

³⁵They built the high places of Baal in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I did not command them, nor did it enter into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin. **Jeremiah 32**

The Point: Moab was a _____ choice of where to go!

"The bottom line in our lives is rarely God's will, as it is revealed in his Word, especially if it seems to cut directly across our best prospects for happiness and success. We rarely think seriously about the impact our choices will have on our ability to raise a Christian family in a world that is often less than ideal." **Iain Duguid**⁷

Elimelech- "My _____ is _____" but he doesn't seem very submissive to God.

Naomi- "My _____"

Mahlon- "Sick"

Chilion- " _____ " or "Annihilation"

Ephrathites- " _____ " (1 Chron. 2:19, 50-51).

Unexpected Turn #1: Elimelech _____ while they were in Moab.

⁴ Elwell, Walter. Editor *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, Baker. 1988. pp. 409-414.

Currid, John. *Against the God: The Polemical Theology of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Zondervan. 2013. pp. 133-134.

⁵ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/109045/Chemosh>

⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chemosh>

⁷ Duguid, Iain. *Esther & Ruth*. Philipsburg, P&R Publishing, 2005. pp. 133.

“They felt more at home in the land of compromise than in the land of promise.” **Iain Duguid**⁸

Unexpected Turn #2: They took _____ wives. (Gen. 24:3; Ex. 34:16).

Orpah- “_____” or perhaps “Back of the Neck” meaning “Stiff-necked One”

Ruth- “_____”

Unexpected Turn #3: Her sons _____ after they had been there a decade.

“As times confirms, their lives may have seemed to hang in the balance from their earliest hours.” **Sinclair Ferguson**⁹

“We are not able to detect with perfect clarity the hand of God in the circumstances of our lives, far less see where he is heading with them.” **Sinclair Ferguson**¹⁰

What will she do? What will God do?

³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? **Romans 8**

Things to Think About:

- Sometimes we suffer because of _____.
- God has a _____, even if we don't.
- We don't have to _____ God's plan for it to unfold for our good.
- Our choices can make our lives _____, but they can't _____ God's plan.
- If we reject God, our plans will lead to our _____!

“We are not able to detect with perfect clarity the hand of God in the circumstances of our lives, far less see where he is heading with them.” **Sinclair Ferguson**¹¹

Theme of the Book: Deuteronomy 30

“And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you,

⁸ Duguid. Pp. 134.

⁹ Ferguson, Sinclair. A Heart for God. Colorado Springs, NavPress. 1985, pp. 139.

¹⁰ Ferguson. pp.14.

¹¹ Ferguson. pp.14.

²and **return** to the LORD your God, you and your children, **and obey his voice** in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, ³then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. ⁴If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will take you. ⁵And the LORD your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. ⁶And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.