

# Women in the Lineage of Christ

## Week 4 – Ruth 1

### Prepare...

As you begin, take a moment to pray and focus on the Lord as you come into his presence and study his word.

You may want to use this prayer, based on Hebrews 4:12

*God, your Word is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing my soul and spirit, my joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of my heart. I want to hear you through your word now.*

### Begin...

Read through the text twice. First read to gain a general understanding of the passage. Read a second time slowly, looking at each verse in detail.

**To make sure you have understood the story in Ruth, answer the following questions (in your head or on paper).**

1. Why did Elimelech and Naomi leave Bethlehem to live in Moab?
2. What kind of women did their sons marry? What were their names?
3. After Naomi's husband and sons died, what did she decide to do?
4. Why did Naomi encourage her daughters-in-law to return to their families?
5. What was the response of each of the daughters?
6. What is the name Naomi gave to herself in verse 20?
7. What time of the year did they arrive in Bethlehem?

### Memory Verse for the Week...

*Psalm 31:23-24*

*"Love the Lord, all his saints! The Lord preserves the faithful, but the proud he pays back in full. Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord."*

## Study Questions

### Historical context

The period of the judges began after the death of Joshua and extended to the start of the monarchy with the anointing of king Saul. It was a time marked by disobedience to God, foreign invasion, and instability.

God raised up leaders to act as judges over the land in order to throw off foreign oppressors and restore peace to the land. (For example, see Judges 3:12-30) Among these leaders were Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, and Samson.

God's amazing patience and deliverance of His people is clearly demonstrated during this period.

### Moab and Israel

#### Numbers 25:1-3

While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate and bowed down before these gods. So Israel joined in worshiping the Baal of Peor. And the Lord's anger burned against them.

#### Deuteronomy 23:2-3

No one born of a forbidden marriage nor any of his descendants may enter the assembly of the Lord, even down to the tenth generation. No Ammonite or Moabite or any of his descendants may enter the assembly of the Lord, even down to the tenth generation.

#### Judges 3: 12-14

Once again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and because they did this evil the Lord gave Eglon king of Moab power over Israel...The Israelites were subject to Eglon king of Moab for eighteen years.

15-28 (God allows one of the Israelites to kill king Eglon and lead them into victory against Moab)

v. 29 At that time they struck down about ten thousand Moabites, all vigorous and strong; not a man escaped.

**For more about Moab and Israel see Genesis 19:30-38**

1. **Ruth chapter 1** sets the stage for the rest of the book. We are introduced to Naomi and Ruth and much about their character is revealed. In verse 20, Naomi refers to herself as "Mara", which means bitterness. Naomi's life was filled with tragedy. List the hardships Naomi experienced.

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2. And yet, Ruth was determined to remain loyal to her. Naomi must have had a profound influence on Ruth. What do you think it was?

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3. Naomi and Ruth arrive back in Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest. What is the significance of famine and harvest in this chapter?

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4. After reading the verses in the box, describe the relationship between Moab and Israel.

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5. Imagine how Ruth felt as a Moabite in Judah. Despite this tension, Ruth pledged her devotion to Naomi, Naomi's people, and Naomi's God. Ruth 1:16-17 is one of the most beautiful expressions of loyalty in the Bible. Copy Ruth's words below.

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