

# The Text

Ruth 1 (CSB)

<sup>1</sup> During the time of the judges, there was a famine in the land. A man left Bethlehem in Judah with his wife and two sons to stay in the territory of Moab for a while.

<sup>2</sup> The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife's name was Naomi. The names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They entered the fields of Moab and settled there.

<sup>3</sup> Naomi's husband, Elimelech, died, and she was left with her two sons.

<sup>4</sup> Her sons took Moabite women as their wives: one was named Orpah and the second was named Ruth. After they lived in Moab about ten years,

<sup>5</sup> both Mahlon and Chilion also died, and the woman was left without her two children and without her husband.

<sup>6</sup> She and her daughters-in-law set out to return from the territory of Moab, because she had heard in Moab that the LORD had paid attention to his people's need by providing them food.

<sup>7</sup> She left the place where she had been living, accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, and traveled along the road leading back to the land of Judah.

<sup>8</sup> Naomi said to them, "Each of you go back to your mother's home. May the LORD show kindness to you as you have shown to the dead and to me.

<sup>9</sup> May the LORD grant each of you rest in the house of a new husband." She kissed them, and they wept loudly.

<sup>10</sup> They said to her, "We insist on returning with you to your people."

<sup>11</sup> But Naomi replied, "Return home, my daughters. Why do you want to go with me? Am I able to have any more sons who could become your husbands?

<sup>12</sup> Return home, my daughters. Go on, for I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me to have a husband tonight and to bear sons,

<sup>13</sup> would you be willing to wait for them to grow up? Would you restrain yourselves from remarrying? No, my daughters, my life is much too bitter for you to share, because the

LORD's hand has turned against me.”

<sup>14</sup> Again they wept loudly, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

<sup>15</sup> Naomi said, “Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. Follow your sister-in-law.”

<sup>16</sup> But Ruth replied: Don't plead with me to abandon you or to return and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you live, I will live; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.

<sup>17</sup> Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me, and do so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.

<sup>18</sup> When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped talking to her.

<sup>19</sup> The two of them traveled until they came to Bethlehem. When they entered Bethlehem, the whole town was excited about their arrival and the local women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?”

<sup>20</sup> “Don't call me Naomi. Call me Mara,” she answered, “for the Almighty has made me very bitter.

<sup>21</sup> I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has opposed me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?”

<sup>22</sup> So Naomi came back from the territory of Moab with her daughter-in-law Ruth the Moabitess. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

# The Introduction

My intention of this particular Bible Study series is two-fold:

Help us study the Bible - Scriptures interpreting Scripture

I so appreciate and thankful to God and to the grace of the elders for letting me start this Bible while Troy is teaching [The Christ Key: Unlocking the Centrality of Christ in the Old Testament](#) because I think it is a fantastic opportunity to put in practice what Dr. Bird is talking about. It is not simply theory but rather, and dare I say it, the primary way of reading Scriptures.

In other words, I am not coming into this church and into this study with a brand new way of studying and explaining the Bible. This way of reading and interpreting the Bible--the hermeneutic--is not only ancient but actually Biblical.

We saw it when declares in Roman 5:14: Adam was a foreshadow of Christ. To that end, Christ is the Second Adam.

Today, this hermeneutic is called **Historical Redemptive** - we see the redemption of God in Christ throughout the whole Scriptures.

And we do so by relying on not on tradition or teachings that were assumed and then passed on but rather a tenet of our faith. This is where the 16th century Reformers lived and died on the hill of **sola Scriptura**. That is a fancy Latin phrase that means "according to Scripture alone". To simplify that: letting Scripture to interpret Scripture.

In other words, we would be in the right to interpret passage in light of another passage or through the lens of another passage. Case in point, read 1 John 4:10: **In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.** Keep 1 John 4:10 in mind while reading through Romans 8, for example.

Seeing four things, places, people, gospels, chapters in a book and I can't help but think of:

Romans 8:28-30 (CSB) We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. **And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified.**

One, we will see theme of God working together all things in the lives of Naomi and Ruth despite their terrible loss and being a resident alien in each other's land.

When you study the Gospels, you see this Romans 8:30 theme played out. When we read and study Ruth and each of the chapters, and it cannot be coincidence that each of the chapters

corresponds with the keys with Romans 8:30:

1. Predestined
2. Called
3. Justified
4. Glorified

This is not a stretch. This is the word of God which is divinely inspired--breathed out by God. All of it is profitable for teaching, correction and reproof. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

And there is no stretch of the imagination when Christ called the Scriptures, "the mouth of God".

Matthew 4:4 (CSB) He answered, "It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

From that end, I want us to ...

See Christ in the book of Ruth

Christ declared that the Scriptures were all about him:

Luke 24:27 (CSB) Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted for them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.

The Bible is all about Jesus Christ. As it has been said famously before, "Old Testament is Christ concealed while the New Testament is Christ revealed."

In other words, the story of Ruth is about Christ. The story of Ruth is not about *how* a single girl can get her future husband.

When you read the Bible, ask yourself, "Is this the word of God prescribing something to me--should I move with my mother-in-law back to her country?" Or is this describing a moment of time and is Christ in it?

Example: the book of Acts. I grew up a Charismatic and still consider myself a Charismatic to this day. Where I would boldly disagree with my camp on the book of Acts. It is not how-to guide on how to bring about revival, how to get everybody to speak in times (25% of those filled with the Holy Spirit in Acts spoke in tongues) and if we do the right things in the right, we can heal people with our shadow or handkerchief. That is the prescription.

Description of the Acts of the Apostles?

Matthew 16:18-19 (CSB) And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of

the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven.”

Since studying the Christ Key, where have you seen Christ in the Scriptures in where he is not explicitly mentioned? How has that helped you understand the Scriptures?

To quote Dr Bird:

Practically speaking, this means that reading Genesis in light of Colossians or Daniel in light of Revelation is not violating a chronological taboo but fully embracing the inspiration of the Scriptures. Yes, of course, we look at each work in its own historical, cultural, and linguistic context, but not to the exclusion of its canonical context. Bird. The Christ Key. 23.

While it is true that the authors in the OT could not have seen the revealed Christ for he was not revealed as the Messiah yet, you best be sure when Moses wrote Genesis 3:15, he knew and believe the gospel of God. For Christ said:

John 8:56 (CSB) Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad.”

And same goes for the author of Ruth. "Hmm, I already see how in the revealed Messiah that God has grafted in the Gentiles into the family of God. And of course, we are not born of the natural seed of Abraham but the spiritual seed that in the revealed Messiah." Of course the authors of the Old Testament could not see it.

But on the day when Christ was finally revealed, Adam rejoice. Noah rejoiced. Abraham rejoiced. Sarah rejoiced. Moses rejoiced. Zipporah rejoiced. Naomi rejoiced. Ruth rejoiced.

Because what they have heard preached in the synagogues and in tents and in throne rooms and around the tabernacle was finally and fully making sense.

They saw him revealed and rejoiced. We see him revealed and we are glad in it.

# God

Ruth 1:1-5 (CSB)

<sup>1</sup> During the time of the judges, there was a famine in the land. A man left Bethlehem in Judah with his wife and two sons to stay in the territory of Moab for a while.

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<sup>5</sup> both Mahlon and Chilion also died, and the woman was left without her two children and without her husband.

## God Predestines: He is Sovereign

Look at the predestination of God:

### Judgment

Judges 19-21 **The people did what was right in their own eyes**; A people without a king (Judges 19:1) and yet they had a King. God saved but God does turn us over to our own understanding. (Romans 1:18-32). That is the sovereignty of God.

### Famine

Genesis 41 - The famine that brought the people of God into Egypt to save his people. A few generations later, they are in bondage to slavery. That is the sovereignty of God.

### Alien

Genesis 19 - the children of Lot

Moabites were in worship of the demon Chemosh. "Now, wait a second, the people were innocent until proven guilty. Their religion is just different than our religion?" The world wants us to tolerate other religions--and to extend, we get to do because all of us have been foolish and led astray and worship idols.

And because we have been born of Adam, we fight to do just that like the people of God--always turning back to their sin and God having to rescue them. But God explicitly defines all

Deuteronomy 32:16–17 (CSB) They provoked his jealousy with different gods; they enraged him with detestable practices. They sacrificed to demons, not God, to gods they had not known, new gods that had just arrived, which your ancestors did not fear.

Leviticus 17:7 (CSB) They must no longer offer their sacrifices to the goat-demons that they have prostituted themselves with. This will be a permanent statute for them throughout their generations.

1 Timothy 4:1 (CSB) Now the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will depart from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons,

1 Corinthians 10:20 (CSB) No, but I do say that what they sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons!

How did the Moabites worship?

2 Kings 3:26-27 (CSB) When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took seven hundred swordsmen with him to try to break through to the king of Edom, but they could not do it. So he took his firstborn son, who was to become king in his place, and offered him as a burnt offering on the city wall. Great wrath was on the Israelites, and they withdrew from him and returned to their land.

In order to provoke and appease their demon-god, their worship was to sit under the preaching of their religion scriptures nor obey their god and do good works unto others or repent for their sins. No. When things are not going their way and they need a change in their immediate circumstances, they have to give something precious to a demon who has no power compared to the Lord our God.

This is land of Moab. This is the demonic religion of Orpah and Ruth. The intermarrying of spouses from different countries was only forbidden by God, not because God is racist, but rather we cannot marry those who do not worship the only God who is our Father in heaven.

## Death

Ruth 1

In God's provision and predestination and leading and directing saves the people of God but then people of God end up in gross sins and wickedness (Judges), sins of slavery (Exodus), sins of incest (Genesis 41), or our deaths (Ruth 1), is God the author of evil?

**1689.3.1 Sovereignty of God:** God hath decreed in himself, from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things,

whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin nor hath fellowship with any therein;

Isaiah 46:10 (CSB) I declare the end from the beginning, and from long ago what is not yet done, saying: my plan will take place, and I will do all my will.

Ephesians 1:11 (CSB) In him we have also received an inheritance, because we were predestined according to the plan of the one who works out everything in agreement with the purpose of his will,

James 1:13 (CSB) No one undergoing a trial should say, "I am being tempted by God," since God is not tempted by evil, and he himself doesn't tempt anyone.

1 John 1:5 (CSB) This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light, and there is absolutely no darkness in him.

Where have you seen evil done against you that God has turned into good? Can you believe that God allowed that to happen?

These are hard questions and the answers don't come easy. You might have had great evil done against you and you might not yet see how God has redeemed you. But be careful and not grieve that moment, try to stuff your feelings and explain it away, "Whelp, God is sovereign." God is sovereign and we live in the post-Genesis 3 world. God is good and entire cosmos is broken.

Is it any wonder then why God has chosen not leave nor forsake us but sent us only begotten Son to live and die for us and to save us from our sins?

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Ruth 1:6-7 (CSB)

<sup>6</sup> She and her daughters-in-law set out to return from the territory of Moab, because she had heard in Moab that the LORD had paid attention to his people's need by providing them food.

<sup>7</sup> She left the place where she had been living, accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, and traveled along the road leading back to the land of Judah.

## God Predestines: He is Good

Naomi and her husband fled their hometown of Bethlehem because the mercies of God was not evident. They have seen that God's provision has literally dried up and they must flee or else they would die.

Did God bring about famine as a consequences of the wickedness of the people of God in the times of the judges? Read the book of Judges and yep, that was evident.

Was it God's intent for Naomi and her husband to settle in the land of the child-sacrificing demon and intermarry their sons with wives who worshipped a child-sacrificing demon. Absolutely not.

But out of this great desperation and great mingling of evilness, God will work out all things for our good and his great pleasure. Every single time.

Here's a more difficult question to ask yourself and be honest: where have you seen your own sins turned into redemption by God alone?

I will never forget what one of my pastors said to me: "Christians have a hard time dealing with redemption. What they want is God to go back in the past, erase all of the sins we have committed and the sins committed against others and God like it never happened so that no bad things have ever happened."

In terms of righteous in the eyes of the Lord, that is true. For he has washes away our sin "white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18) and "removed our trespasses as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12).


But we sit here, as the people of God, righteous in his eyes because of Christ and yet, we still feel the effects of sin--even sins that happened to us long ago when we were younger. And we wish that sin never happened.

And God saw all of that. And God knew that. That is why he sent his Son to live and die so that we are a new creation saved unto him forever and ever.

We don't have to have an excuse. We don't have to blameshift. We don't have to hold on to our own bitterness. We get to rest in the presence of God where there is only fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. (Psalm 16:11)

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## The Resources

 Judges and Ruth: An Introduction and Commentary (Tyndale Old Testament Commentary)  
by Arthur E. Cundall & Leon L. Morris.  
IVP Academic. June 1, 1968.  
[Goodreads](#)


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 A Sweet and Bitter Providence: Sex, Race, and the Sovereignty of God  
by John Piper.  
Crossway. January 1, 2010.  
[Goodreads](#)

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 Esther & Ruth (Reformed Expository Commentary)  
by Iain M. Duguid.  
P & R Publishing. October 1, 2005.  
[Goodreads](#)


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 ESV Reformation Study Bible  
Commentary & Edited by R.C. Sproul.  
Ligonier Ministries. March 16, 2015.  
[Goodreads](#)


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 Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume  
by Matthew Henry.  
Hendrickson Publishers. 1991.  
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 Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown's Commentary on the Whole Bible  
by Robert Jamieson, Alexander Cruden & Andrew Robert Fausset.  
Zondervan. 1961.  
[Goodreads](#)

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 An Exposition of the Old Testament, Vols. I–VI  
by John Gill.

Public Domain.

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