

GETTING OUT OF THE WILL OF GOD-PART 2

RUTH 1:1-7

Introduction:

In these first seven verses of Ruth we are introduced to **the family of a man named Elimelech who lived during the days of the judges**. The story begins as a sad tale of **a man who chooses to walk out on the Lord and on God's plan for his life**. As a result of his decision, **he and his family pay a terribly high price**.

IT WAS A TIME OF DESPERATE CIRCUMSTANCES.

There Was A Material Famine In The Land.

There Was A Moral Famine In The Land.

IT WAS A TIME OF DANGEROUS CHOICES.

They Chose To Leave The Promised Land.

They Chose To Live In A Polluted Land.

They Chose To Linger In A Prodigal Land.

III. IT WAS A TIME OF DEADLY CONSEQUENCES. (Vs. 3-5)

Sin ALWAYS carries with it harsh consequences! This was the case in the life of Elimelech and his family as well.

A. Discipline Came. (Vs. 2)

Before Elimelech loaded up his family to move to Moab, **it is likely that he had already moved away from God in his heart**.

You see, **no one just wakes up one morning and decides to leave God behind!** It is a slow subtle process that builds until the believer has moved farther away from the Lord than he could have ever anticipated.

The reason I say discipline came lies in the names of Elimelech's sons. Their names were **Mahlon** which means "Sick" and **Chilion** which means "Pining, or Wasting Away."

Some may believe that these two boys were just the victims of circumstance. But, if you believe that, then you don't believe in a God of providence!

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I think God was trying to get Elimelech's attention long before he ever left for Moab. Friend, God will do the same in our lives as well. If you are not where you should be in your spiritual life, let me ask you a sobering question:

What will it take in your life for God to get your attention?

When a backslidden spirit begins to manifest itself in our life, God will begin the process of speaking to our heart. He may do it in a still small voice (as He revealed to Elijah).

Or, He may do with the thundering voice of a prophet as He did with David.

He may use **subtle means**, or He may use **direct means**, but if we are His, He will reach out to us to bring us home again!

Jesus had these words for the backslidden Church in Laodecia: *Revelation 3:19*—"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Hebrews 12:5-11

Discipline Came...

B. Death Came. (Vs. 3-5)

In spite of his relationship to the Lord, in spite of the blessings of God, in spite of the intervention of the Lord in his family, Elimelech moved to Moab.

What was a reality in his heart became a reality in his life!

After he was there for some time, he died. After a while, his sons were also taken in death.

Here we see that God used the ultimate form of discipline in the life of Elimelech and his sons in order to bring the remainder of the family back to God.

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1 John 5:16 tells us that, "...*There is a sin unto death...*"

The famine in Bethlehem was God's call to repentance!
Those sick sons were a call to repent!

But Elimelech pulled up his roots in the Lord and ran!
He moved far away from the place where he belonged to a
place that was forbidden for those who knew the LORD!

So, God removed Elimelech through the avenue of death. And
his death should have been a wake-up call to the rest of the
family to leave Moab and go back where they belonged!

But the wake-up call was ignored to the detriment of two more
family members.

It is sad, but it is also true, **God will use whatever means that
He deems necessary to bring us home again!** If we are His,
we won't run from Him forever. He will discipline our lives
and if we don't repent, He will take us home.

Discipline Came...Death Came...

C. **Defeat Came. (Vs 5)**

I want you to note that both Naomi and her two daughters-
in-law were left desolate. In that day and time, the poorest of
the poor were widows with no children to care for them.

These women were left with nothing but **desolation,
discouragement and defeat.** Now, it didn't have to be that
way, but because of the sin and wrong choices of Elimelech,
they were forced to pay a horrible price.

Our sin can have a devastating effect on the ones we love!

All Naomi had to show for the disobedience and backsliding of
her family were three tombstones in the land of Moab.

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All she had left were her two daughters-in-law and she couldn't
even provide for them. These women were in a desperate
condition!

That is the nature of sin! It never brings anything good into our
lives! While it may give those who wander off into it some
pleasure in the flesh in the short term, (*Hebrews 11:25*), all it
can produce in the long term is **death, defeat and
discouragement.**

If you want to **destroy your family, devastate your life and
doom those you love,** just wander off to your Moab and stay
there. There is a price to pay!

Proverbs 13:15—"...*the way of transgressors is hard.*"

Sow seeds of unfaithfulness now in your own life and the life
of those you love and you will reap a harvest of greater
unfaithfulness in your family in the generations to come!

Just go ahead and put the things of God last in your life and see
how your children and grandchildren treat them when they
grow up!

Go ahead and indulge your flesh and its sinful appetites and see
what good comes of it.

When chastisement, defeat, disillusionment and
discouragement come in your life, just remember, that you are
only reaping the harvest that you foolishly sowed!

Galatians 6:7-8—"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for
whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he
that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but
he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life
everlasting."

The time to repent and make a difference is now!

*IT WAS A TIME OF DESPERATE CIRCUMSTANCES
...DANGEROUS CHOICES...DEADLY CONSEQUENCES.*

IV. **IT WAS A TIME OF DELIBERATE CHANGES. (Vs 6-7)**

These last two verses of our text this morning will help us to leave this message with a little hope. Out of **discipline, death and defeat** we can catch a glimpse of **renewal, life and victory** in the actions of Naomi.

A. **There Was A Time Of Realization. (Vs 6)**

Somehow or another Naomi heard that the Lord was again blessing His people. In reality, He had never stopped blessing!

Did you know His **chastisement is also His blessing**? If God didn't love us then He wouldn't chastise us when we fail Him.

Anyway, it appears that someone came into Moab with the good news that God was blessing back in Israel. That sparked a desire in her heart to go home.

Maybe she remembered what it was like to be close to the things of God.

Maybe she remembered the sacrifices and the worship.

Maybe she missed the sweet fellowship she had enjoyed with the people of God.

Whatever the thoughts were that went through her head, she finally woke up in Moab and wanted to go home!

That's the same thing that happened to the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:17, "*And when he came to himself...*"

(Being in a Backslidden condition is a form of insanity.)

When the Prodigal saw where he was and thought back on his Father's house and what he was missing out on, he wanted to go home! It was the same way here with Naomi!

Sooner or later, that time of realization comes to all of those who wander away from the Father's house.

There will come a time when the fog and haze of sin will clear away for a moment and in that moment of clarity, the backslider will see just where he is and how far he has fallen. He will hear the tender voice of the Lord saying, "*There's bread in my house. Come home!*"

That moment can be a defining moment in the life of the person who is away from the Lord!

If they, like Naomi, **will remember and will arise and head back, they will reenter the realm of blessing and hope.**

But, if they continue on in their sins and their wanderings, they will open themselves up to progressively harsher chastisements. What is the Lord saying to your heart today?

There Was A Time Of Realization...

B. **There Was A Time Of Repentance. (Vs 6-7)**

The Bible says that she "*Arose...that she might return from the country of Moab*", (Vs. 6); and "*Wherefore she went out of the place where she was...*" (Vs 7)

Naomi rose up and left Moab behind! She experienced a change of heart that resulted in a change of action.

She is a picture of someone repenting of their time away from God and returning home!

Friend, if you are guilty of leaving God for a Moab of your own, then you need to do what Naomi did!

Can you see (like the Prodigal) that it was better back at the Father's house? Can you remember the times when the Lord met with your soul in sweet communion. Are you looking back at a time when you were closer to the Lord and served Him more faithfully and fervently than you do today?

It is time to come home! It is time to bring that sin, that attitude, that problem, that hurt, whatever it is to the altar and let God have it!

It is time to repent of your sins and come home to the Father!

It is time to leave your Moab behind you, to get out of that place and to get back to the Lord!

If you will, He will receive you and He will balance the books of your life. *1 John 1:9—“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

There Was A Time Of Reflection, Repentance. . .

C. There Was A Time Of Returning. (Vs 7)

Naomi rose up and went on her way to return to the land of Judah. She was headed back to the land of "Praise". She was going back to where she should have been all along! She was going home!

Did you know that God never saved us so that we could wander off into sin?

He saved us so that we might worship Him in spirit and in truth, be used of Him for His glory, so that we might live a life filled with joy, peace and the glory of God.

But, that will never be true as long as we choose to remain in Moab. You see, dwelling in Moab will rob you of your peace, of your joy, of your praise, of your usefulness to the Lord.

It will kill anything in us that God can use to help us and to bless us. If you are away from God today, return to the place of praise...go back where you belong in the place of God's blessing!

Conclusion:

When Naomi went into Moab, by her own testimony, she went in full! (Ruth 1:21) When she came out, she came out empty.

All of her hopes, all of her dreams and all of her tomorrows were reduced to three tombstones in a washpot called Moab.

When she left that country she left everything she had valued behind. When you go to Moab, you always leave something!

Naomi left three tombstones in her Moab, what will you leave behind? Will you leave your testimony? Will you leave your health? Will you leave your wealth? Will you leave your family? What will your journey away from God cost you?

Whatever it is, it will cost less to come home today than it will if you wait to a later date. You will leave less behind if you come now than if you wait until later. God can salvage more from your life now than He can if you linger in that polluted country.

If you don't know the Lord, this message is for you too! God is calling you to leave your wretched life of sin behind and to come to Him and be saved. If you linger there away from Him, you will pay the ultimate price. You will lose your soul in Hell! It doesn't have to be that way. If the Lord is calling you to be saved, get to Him today and let Him take care of that for you!