

Ruth 2A (Draft Speaker's Notes)

Introduction

We will finish chapter 1 tonight. As a short review where did we find Naomi at the end of verse 5? (show verses on screen)

- (*Moab*) Let's look at a map and see where Moab is. (Map on screen)

Read the next section:

[Ruth 1:6](#) ¶ Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the land of Moab, for she had heard in the land of Moab that the LORD had visited His people in giving them food.

[Ruth 1:7](#) So she departed from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.

1. Where do the scriptures tell us she wants to go?

To her land (Judah)

Why?

Because God has visited His people

God provided food again, which prompted the family to return.

We know that God has prompted their return because Naomi is giving the Lord credit for the giving of the food.

2. Who goes with Naomi?

Both Orpah and Ruth

3. Why do you think they would plan to go with her?

Some reasons...

- *Naomi treated them well*
- *No other place to go*
- *The prospect of food*
- *The chance to remarry or have a new life*

4. In verses 8 and 9 Naomi tells the women three separate things.

Can you find them with me?

Ruth 1:8 And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go, return each of you to her mother’s house. May the LORD deal kindly with you as you have dealt with the dead and with me.

Ruth 1:9 “May the LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband.” Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

Ruth 1:10 And they said to her, “No, but we will surely return with you to your people.”

1. *“Go, return each of you to her mother’s house”*

Why do you think she says this?

Maybe because Naomi knows the mother's have homes to offer them and she does not.

Keep in mind that for a woman to be married and to not have children was often considered a form of judgment from the gods of different cultures.

2. *“May the LORD deal kindly with you as you have dealt with the dead and with me.”*

Who are the “dead?”

Naomi is acknowledging the women seem to have been good to all the family members, to her sons (who are the dead) and to her.

5. In verse 9 she ends with what statement to them?

“May the LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband.”

Notice she is doing two things here.

- She is looking for the Lord to bless them with “rest” from their widow-hood.
- She is releasing them from any obligation they would have to her so that they can be free to marry.

6. What is their response?

“No, but we will surely return with you to your people.”

Let's return to the story

[Ruth 1:11](#) But Naomi said, "Return, my daughters. Why should you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?"

[Ruth 1:12](#) "Return, my daughters! Go, for I am too old to have a husband. If I said I have hope, if I should even have a husband tonight and also bear sons,

[Ruth 1:13](#) would you therefore wait until they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters; for it is harder for me than for you, for the hand of the LORD has gone forth against me."

[Ruth 1:14](#) And they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

Verses 11-13 can seem a bit odd until you have an understanding of an OT practice.

Let's look at some other scriptures for clarity.

Deut. 25:5-10

[Deut. 25:5](#) ¶ "When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be *married* outside *the family* to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.

[Deut. 25:6](#) "It shall be that the firstborn whom she bears shall assume the name of his dead brother, so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel.

[Deut. 25:7](#) " But if the man does not desire to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to establish a name for his brother in Israel; he is not willing to perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.'

[Deut. 25:8](#) "Then the elders of his city shall summon him and speak to him. And *if* he persists and says, 'I do not desire to take her,'

[Deut. 25:9](#) then his brother's wife shall come to him in the sight of the elders, and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face; and she shall declare, 'Thus it is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.'

[Deut. 25:10](#) "In Israel his name shall be called, 'The house of him whose sandal is removed.'

These verse can be summed up with a verse from the Gospels:

[Mark 12:19](#) "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that IF A MAN'S BROTHER DIES and leaves behind a wife AND LEAVES NO CHILD, HIS BROTHER SHOULD MARRY THE WIFE AND RAISE UP CHILDREN TO HIS BROTHER.

This might be a difficult teaching since we live in such a different time and culture.

This is the Leverite marriage process that preserves the name and the line of the elder son.

We will look at this more clearly in Ruth chapter 4.

7. Now with this teaching from scripture in mind, what do we see Naomi is telling Orpah and Ruth?

- 1) *Are you expecting to go with me and wait for me to remarry?*
- 2) *Will you then wait for me to have a son?*
- 3) *Will you then wait for that son to grow up and become old enough to marry?*
- 4) *Will you also refrain from marriage in the mean time?*

She says this because these women had no other chance to find husbands in Israel.

It would have been against the moral teaching of the Jewish men to marry a Gentile woman and in particular a Moabite woman anyway.

8. How does Naomi respond?

No, my daughters; for it is harder for me than for you, for the hand of the LORD has gone forth against me.”

As difficult as this may seem to them to endure it is worse for her.

She is giving up all hope of an inheritance through sons and grandsons and this is the Lord's doing.

Often we can see clarity in scripture from the contrast demonstrated by two individuals in similar circumstances.

Let's look at the difference between the responses of Orpah and Ruth.

9. What does the kiss from Orpah represent in verse 14?

Hint: In this culture a kiss communicated finality.

Maybe an acceptance that this may be a permanent parting of their ways.

Now verse 15 gives the stark contrast of these two women.

Ruth 1:15 ¶ Then she said, “Behold, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her gods; return after your sister-in-law.”

Ruth 1:16 But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you *or* turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people *shall be* my people, and your God, my God.

Ruth 1:17 “Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if *anything but* death parts you and me.”

Ruth 1:18 When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

10. What does verse 15 say that Orpah returned to?

Behold, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her gods.

What’s being communicated here?

She put her trust in one other than the God of Israel.

The god that the Moabites worshiped was Chermosh.

11. What might be assume about Naomi given her choice to return to her people and gods?

Probably an indication that she never really embraced the God of her husband and his Naomi.

Never held a saving faith in the God if Israel

12. Compare this to Ruth's response.

Ruth clung to Naomi.

We might find a good memory jogger in this part of the Ruth to describe the three women:

Grieving widow (Orpah)

Leaving widow (Naomi)

Cleaving widow (Ruth)

[Ruth 1:19](#) ¶ So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?”

[Ruth 1:20](#) ¶ “Don’t call me Naomi,” she told them. “Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter.

[Ruth 1:21](#) I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.”

[Ruth 1:22](#) ¶ So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

13. What’s different from the beginning of this chapter compared to the end?

Naomi returns bitter

She comes back empty

She no longer has ownership of land because she comes back without a man. She has no inheritance.

She is so bitter that she tells her old neighbors and friends to call her Mara, which means bitter

(Opportunity for personal application of difficulty and bitterness)

But the land is enjoying a barley harvest. There is blessing waiting for Naomi and Ruth.