

## BE A BRINGER

*“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”* John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

## PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

*“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....”* I Samuel 12:23a

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# Ruth

Loss, Love and Legacy  
GROWTH GUIDE

Handout: 05/06/18

Study: 05/13/18

## Rebuilding Your Life After A Loss

### The Work of God in the Darkest of Times

According to Ruth 1:1, the story took place during the time of the judges. This was a 400-year period after Israel entered the promised land under Joshua and before there were any kings in Israel (roughly 1500 BC to 1100 BC). The book of Judges comes just before Ruth in our English Bibles and you can see from its very last verse what sort of period it was. Judges 21:25 says, "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes." It was a very dark time in Israel. The people would sin, God would send enemies against them, the people would cry for help, and God would mercifully raise up a judge to deliver them. Again and again the people rebelled, and from all outward appearances God's purposes for righteousness and glory in Israel were failing. And what the book of Ruth does for us is give us a glimpse of the hidden work of God during the worst of times.

Look at the last verse of Ruth (4:22). The child born to Ruth and Boaz during the period of the judges is Obed. Obed becomes the father of Jesse and Jesse becomes the father of David who led Israel to her greatest heights of glory. One of the main messages of this little book is that God is at work in the worst of times. Even through the sins of His people he can and he does plot for their glory. It was true at the national level. And we will see that it is true at the personal, family level, too. God is at work in the worst of times. When you think He is farthest from you, or has even turned against you, the truth is that He is laying foundation stones of greater happiness in your life.

### Adding Grief to Famine

Verses 1–5 describe the misery of Naomi. First (1:1), there is a famine in Judah where Naomi and her husband Elimelech and her sons Mahlon and Chilion live. Naomi knows good and well who causes famines. God does. Leviticus 26:3–4 says,

*“If you walk in my statutes and observe my commandments and do them, then I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase.”*

When the rains are withheld, it is the hard hand of God.

Then, there is the decision to sojourn in Moab—a pagan land with foreign gods (1:15; Judges 10:6). This was playing with fire. God had called His people to be separate from the surrounding lands.

Then (in 1:4), her two sons take Moabite wives, one named Orpah, the other named Ruth. Verse 5 sums up Naomi's tragedy: "Both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was bereft of her two sons and her husband." A famine, a move to pagan Moab, the death of her husband, the marriage of her sons to foreign wives, and the death of her sons—blow after blow, tragedy upon tragedy. Now what? Source: <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/ruth-sweet-and-bitter-providence>

## KEY VERSE

Ruth 1:5

*Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband. NKJV*

## WEEKLY READINGS

### Monday: Ruth 1:1-5

#### Introduction

1. Describe a time you went through a really difficult circumstance. Were you tempted to question the goodness of God? Why or why not?
2. How would you describe the situation that Naomi finds herself in? How would you feel if you were in her shoes?

### Tuesday: Ruth 1:1a; Judges 2:7-19; Judges 21:25

#### Difficult Times

3. The story of Ruth happened during the time of the judges. What do you know about this time? What was life like in Israel?
4. Read Judges 21:25. What happens when people only do what seems right in their own eyes? How is the time of the judges like our own? How is it different?

### Wednesday: Ruth 1:1-2; Numbers 25:1-3; Zephaniah 2:8-9

#### Strangers In A Strange Land

5. What do you think it must have been like to be an Israelite living in pagan Moab?
6. What are some times in your life where you have felt like a stranger in a strange place?

### Thursday: Ruth 1:3-5; Psalm 62:8; Psalm 18:4-6

#### Great Loss

7. The family endured great loss in Moab. What are some ways that you have dealt with loss that you have experienced?
8. What are some healthy biblical ways to deal with grief?
9. In Matthew 5:4, Jesus said “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” How has God provided you comfort during times of loss?

### Friday: Isaiah 12:2; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:5-17

#### Rely on God

10. Why is it difficult to rely on God during our suffering?
11. It is difficult to see good in our suffering while it is happening. Over the next several weeks we will read about God’s plan for this family. How have you seen God’s provision for you in your suffering?