

## God's Kindness in the Midst of Suffering

### Ruth 1

September 17, 2025

One of 2 books in the Bible named after women. It's the only OT book about a non-Jew. It doesn't have a bad guy in it, or at least, an antagonist.

#### Intro

We find a family in a difficult time. It seems that they take some wrong turns as they seek to navigate these circumstances, and these wrong turns have disastrous consequences.

We learn two things about the context. It was the time of Judges. And there was a famine in the land.

#### **Kindness Among the Women**

It was in the times of Judges, a time of wickedness when everyone did what was right in their own eyes instead of just what was right.

#### *Naomi*

V. 8 - She encourages them to go back home. She prays for her daughters-in-law, asking God to bless them and that they will find rest in the home of another husband.

All the women weep together as Naomi kissed them. Clearly these women had deep affections for one another.

#### *Orpah*

V. 10 - Orpah, along with Ruth, refuse to leave.

Orpah eventually does, but v. 14 says that the women wept again. Orpah kissed Naomi, and then left.

#### *Ruth*

All that was said about Orpah is also true of Ruth, other than Ruth's kindness is even greater. Orpah kissed Naomi and left, but Ruth clung to her.

## God's Surprising Kindness

Naomi's testimony is that God dealt bitterly with her and sent her home empty. Why would God do this? Well, there's more than meets the eye.

Famine in the time of the judges was most likely because of discipline

- Elimelech should have seen the famine, and cried out to God for deliverance and provision. Instead, his answer was to do what God had said *not* to do.

*C.S. Lewis - Suffering is God's megaphone, designed to awaken us to our need for Him. God whispers to us in our pleasures but shouts in our pains: it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.*

### Names

Naomi - Pleasant

Mahlon - Sickly

Chilion - Frail

Elimelech - My God is king.

Elimelech was born to a family who taught him to worship God and look to him as king. God was Lord and king of Israel. But the man whose name means submission to this king, instead of turning to God, turns his back on God's people and His land.

Did Naomi leave full and return empty?