

### **Scripture – Ruth 1:6-19 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the Lord had visited his people and given them food. <sup>7</sup> So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. <sup>8</sup> But 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. <sup>9</sup> The Lord grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. <sup>10</sup> And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." <sup>11</sup> But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? <sup>12</sup> Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, <sup>13</sup> would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me."<sup>14</sup> Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

<sup>15</sup> And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." <sup>16</sup> But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return 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.<sup>17</sup> Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you." <sup>18</sup> And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more. <sup>19</sup> So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, "Is this Naomi?"

### **Summary:**

Famine has hit Bethlehem, which forces Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, to move east to Moab with their two sons. The sons marry two local girls, Ruth and Orpah. When Elimelech and his two sons die, Naomi decides to head back to Bethlehem (after ten years of being away) and her daughters-in-law join her. Naomi begs the girls to stay behind and, while Orpah decides to remain in Moab, Ruth pledges her devotion to Naomi, forsaking her god and her people to become part of Naomi's life.

In Bethlehem, Ruth is reduced to gleaning in the barley fields. There, she runs into a relative named Boaz, who generously provides grain for her and Naomi. When Naomi hears about Boaz, she tells Ruth that he is a kinsman redeemer for them and that Ruth could marry him. Boaz tells Ruth that he would love to marry her, but that there's another relative with even closer ties to her in-laws. However, that relative surrenders his rights as provider to Boaz. Ruth and Boaz marry and have a son, who goes on to be the grandfather of King David.

Ruth is a foreigner who decides that the God of her mother-in-law Naomi is worth more than anything her own culture and family can offer. She leaves behind everything she knows to follow Naomi as an exile to Israel because of the hope, holiness, fear, and love that she knows of Naomi's God.

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**START (the group):** Follow up with your group regarding their applications from last week. Ask them how they did in applying last week's text.

Transition: For the past few weeks we've been studying 1 Peter chapter 1 and this week, we want to take the time to study a Biblical example of what Peter discusses. Peter discusses the concept of being an elect exile, a foreigner who is chosen by Christ and is confident in the salvation and hope Jesus provides. He goes on to say that because of our standing in Christ, we can be filled with hope of promised grace, holiness that comes only from God, reverent fear of the Lord, and love for one another. This week we are going to examine Ruth's story to further explore the manifestation of these themes in the life of a believer.

**STUDY (the passage):**

Read: Ruth 1:6-19

1. Did anything stick out to you from the passage?
2. Is there anything that you have a question about?
3. How does Ruth's story relate to the 1 Peter theme of elect exiles? Salvation in Christ? Hope, holiness, fear, and love?
4. How do the different characters respond to God's call to go to Bethlehem?

**APPLY:**

5. Who do you most relate to in this story? Naomi, Orpah, or Ruth?
6. What is one thing God is asking you to do in response to this passage?