



THE REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD

CHRIST THE LORD PARISH

1-5 ADMIRALITY ROAD, LEKKI PHASE 1, LEKKI

Digging Deep

Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2023

Topic: Leaving and Returning to the Land of Rest

Text: Ruth 1: 1- 22

INTRODUCTION:

I just discovered or created a word, it is called "contemporisation". Excited when we are able to apply a bible story to ongoing things/events/patterns in our world. This first lesson in our 4 parts series does exactly that in the context of "Japa", "searching out and doing the will of God", "in-law matters" etc. Let us quickly start by looking at the meaning of the names of the characters in this chapter.

Elimelech: my God is King

Mahlon: sick

Orpah: double minded

Naomi: pleasant.

Chilion: pining (wasting away).

Ruth: satisfied.

1. **Cause of the exit.** Severe famine in Judah (**Ruth 1:1**). Often a major reason in bible times for departure to other places; **Gen 12:10, 26:1, 42:5, 47:4, 2 Sam 24:13**. Why a famine; punishment for sins, refuge, disobedience, accord priority to God (**Hag 1:11**), God prerogative (**Ps 105:16**).
2. **Exit from Bethlehem -Judah (Ruth 1:1)**, which means the house of bread and praise. Nigeria is derived from Niger which means river among rivers. A gospel artist once sang prophetically concerning Nigeria that the Land is Green.
3. **Departure to Moab (Ruth 1:1-2)**. Origin of Moab: incest between Lot and his first daughter (**Gen 19:33/37**), Nature: a people given to idol worship (Molech) and child sacrifice. Relationship with Israel: hired Balaam to curse Israel (**Num 22:1-8**). How God saw them: as a wash pot (**Ps 60:8**).
4. **Happenings in a Strange Land.**
 - a. Before departure. Why **give negative names** to their Children. Didn't they learn from Jacob regarding Benjamin (**Gen 35:18**), Jabez (**1 Chron 4:9**).
 - b. **Wrong location** is a departure from God's plans. Babylon (**Jer 51:1**), Tarshish (**Jon 1:3/7**).
 - c. Death of Elimelech (**Ruth 1:3**): **did he transgress** by going to the wrong location, **Prov 13:15b**.
 - d. **Forgetting the laws of the Lord** by allowing sons to marry wrongly (**Ruth 4**). Didn't she read **Deut 23:3** and shouldn't we be reading **2 Cor 6:14**.
 - e. **Staying long in a wrong decision (Ruth 1:4)**. Did Ruth need 10 years to know that something was wrong. Sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit and obeying promptly is key.
 - f. **Negative family patterns** need to be recognized and acted upon. The loss of Mahlon and Chilion (**Ruth 1:5**). An interesting negative pattern in Abraham's lineage was the rejection of first-born sons (Ishmael, Esau, Rueben, Manasseh).
5. **Assessment of Situation and decision-making time.**
 - a. **Good news** from afar (**Prov 25:25**) triggers the need to reconsider stance (**Ruth 1:6**).
 - b. **Parting ways** from a wrong decision/location is excellent (**Ruth 1:7**). Separation precedes sanctification, **Gen 12:1, 2 Cor 6:17, Jer 29:10**.

- c. **Appeal to Ruth and Orpah** to stay in wrong location and pursue plausible option (**Ruth 1:8-13**). Are we to persuade others to remain in darkness/sin?
- d. **Naomi acknowledgment of the chastening of God (Ruth 1:13)**. We know God chastens those he loves; **Prov 3:11, Heb 12:5-8**.

6. We move:

- a. **Back to perdition** as is likely the case with Orpah returning to her gods/people (**Ruth 1:14**), recall meaning of her name. No mention of her again.
- b. **Into God's awesome plans Heb 11:10, Jos 24:15. We see a very strong display of loyalty, faithfulness and kindness** between Mother in Love and Daughter in Love (quite rare in contemporary times (**Ruth 1:14-18**). She clung tightly, what commitment!!!. Choose Jesus over natural relations, **Ps 45:10**.

7. Back to Base (Right location).

- a. **Distress can disfigure** one physically, spiritually and emotionally. Hence the remark "is this Naomi" (**Ruth 1:19**). No matter the battering though, we must come back to Jesus.
- b. **Naomi not learning lessons (Ruth 1:20)**, call me bitter not pleasant. There is power in what we confess (**Prov 18:21**).
- c. **God's timing is perfect**. Naomi and Ruth came at the beginning of harvest (**Ruth 1:22**). **Rom 8:28, Phil 2:13**. Timing of this series on Ruth....2023 is our season of abundant harvest.

CONCLUSION: Appeal to Ruth and Orpah to stay in wrong location and pursue plausible option (Ruth 1:8-13). Are we to persuade others to remain in darkness/sin?

This is indeed a wonderful story of commitment, loyalty, faithfulness and kindness. It speaks to the need for us to retrace our steps where we have gone wrong. Have you gone out of the protective cover of Jesus, this is the time to heed the call to return back to his saving arms. Brethren we see from the book of Ruth that God is not only interested in nations and churches but also in the little details of our lives and families,

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