

RUTH

FAITHFULNESS IN FAMINE

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STORYTELLER

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ABOUT STORYTELLER

God could've chosen to reveal Himself in any way He desired, yet in His wisdom, He chose to reveal Himself in the context of a story. We come to know and understand this reality as we immerse ourselves in the Scriptures and begin to see the entirety of Scripture as one interconnected story. By becoming familiar with the individual stories of Scripture, we train ourselves to see each as one part of God's big story.

Storyteller: Ruth is a five-week devotional and group Bible study experience designed to take people through Scripture in a way that is beautiful, intuitive, and interactive. Each volume uses a book of the Bible or a portion of Scripture from within a book to examine a key theme. This theme guides the Bible study experience and gives readers handles to help understand and digest what they're reading.

At the end of each study, you should have a deeper understanding of God, His Word, the big themes of Scripture, the connectedness of God's story, and His work in your life.

Let's enter the story together.

ABOUT RUTH

SUMMARY

The book of Ruth is a beautiful story of faithfulness in famine. Naomi and her husband left the land God had promised to His people to find provision elsewhere in Moab—a land known for its worship of idols. The family settled there and their sons married Moabite women. Naomi's husband and two sons died in Moab, greatly expanding her understanding of the meaning of *famine*. Apart from two daughters-in-law, she had nothing and no one—or so she thought. One daughter-in-law, Ruth, became an ever-present demonstration of faithfulness and the means by which God would provide above and beyond anything either woman could possibly imagine. Leaving Moab and returning to Bethlehem, a city in the land God's promises, Ruth stepped forward in her newfound faith to gather leftover grain in a field. Unknown to her, that field belonged to Naomi's wealthy relative, Boaz. God was at work. In short order, Boaz faithfully fulfilled the role of family redeemer for Naomi and Ruth. Boaz married Ruth, and they had a child named Obed. Naomi's grandson Obed was God's provision for Naomi's security in the present and also for the future security of all God's people. Obed became the grandfather of David, whose descendant is Jesus Christ.

PURPOSE

A Gentile (non-Jewish) woman from a pagan nation who God involved in the earthly lineage of the one and only Messiah shows God's heart for all people from every nation. A broken woman from the chosen nation who God provided for shows His ever-present care for those who follow Him. The book of Ruth shows, in every human condition and circumstance, that God is faithful and trustworthy to ultimately answer uncertainties with hope and redemption for those who trust in Him.

CIRCUMSTANCES

Ruth takes place “during the time of the judges” (1:1), when “everyone did whatever seemed right to him” (Judges 17:6). This was a period of great moral decline among God’s people. Chapter one begins with famine in Bethlehem, which may very well have been the result of Israel’s rebellion.

AUTHOR AND DATE

The book of Ruth does not indicate its author. However, the Talmud (Jewish tradition) attributes its writing to the prophet Samuel. The events detailed in Ruth took place around 1100 BC, near the time that Samuel was born. The genealogy included at the end of Ruth shows us that it was written later, at some point after David was anointed as the king of Israel (1050 BC).¹

1. Adapted from: Iain M. Duguid, “Ruth,” in *CSB Study Bible: Notes*, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 401.

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE OF RUTH

Moab (1:1-22)	Elimilech's family departs for Moab. Death and despair lead Naomi and Ruth to decide to return to Bethlehem.
Fields of Bethlehem (2:1-23)	Ruth meets Boaz, who then provides for Naomi and Ruth.
Boaz's Threshing Floor (3:1-18)	God provides instructions to build the tabernacle so that He may dwell with His people.
City of Bethlehem (4:1-22)	Boaz marries Ruth, who then gives birth to Obed, blessing Naomi with a new family. With Obed's birth, Ruth becomes an ancestor of David.

TIME FRAME OF EVENTS

Problems in Moab (1:1-5)	Ten years
Provision in Bethlehem (1:6-4:12)	Two months
Provision in God's Plan of Redemption (4:13-22)	First year of marriage, conception and birth of Obed

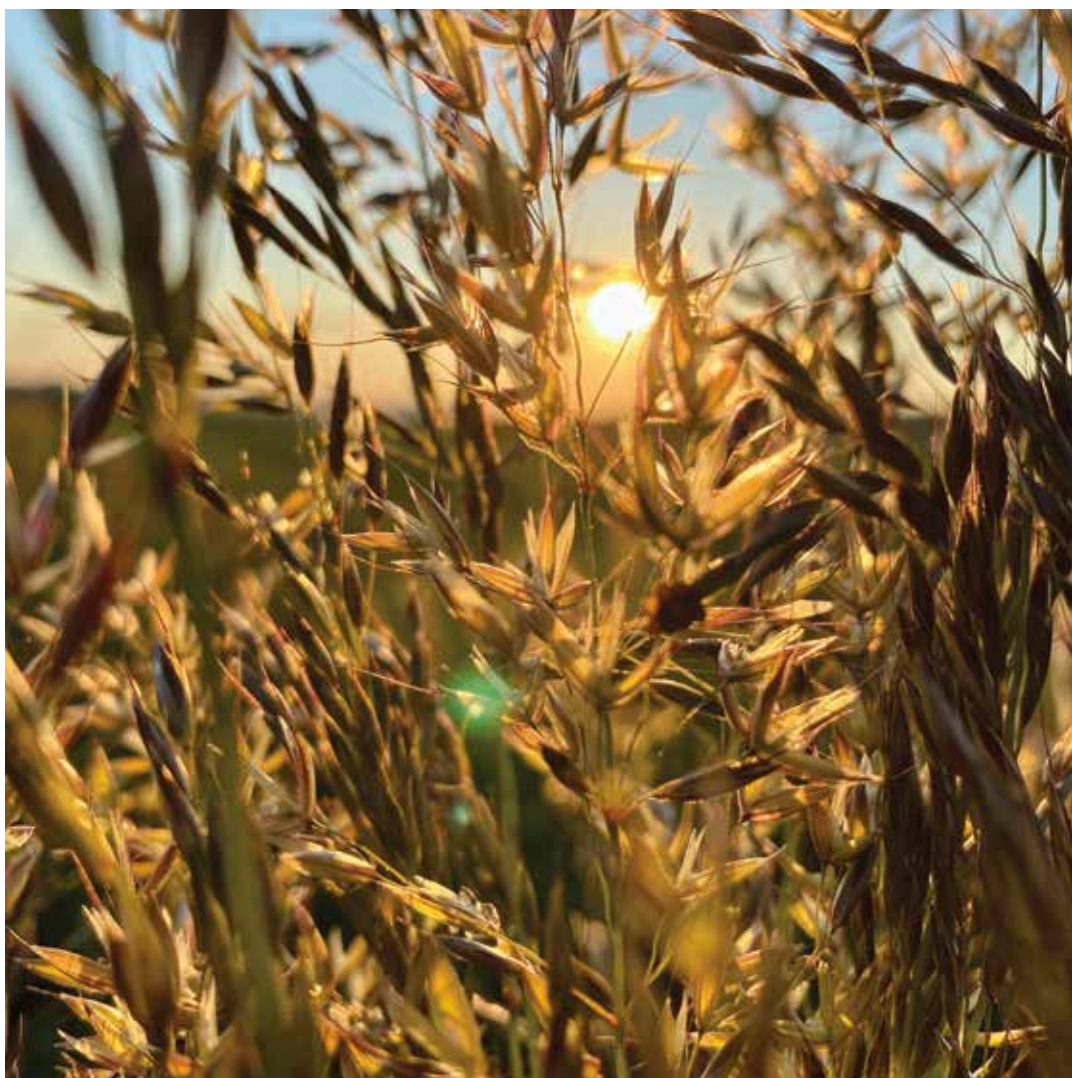


WHY STUDY RUTH?

From Genesis to Revelation, God reveals Himself through miracles. In those same pages of Scripture, He reveals Himself in the routine and ordinary events of daily life—and far more often. To this point, the book of Ruth serves as a beacon of hope in our most mundane moments. There are no outright miracles in Ruth, yet few books of the Bible help us see God’s sovereignty, grace, and provision so clearly. In our loss, our grief, and even our bitterness, He is at work.

But it is not only God’s provision in the day-to-day of earthly life that Ruth demonstrates. The bigger picture is that sin causes every person a spiritual famine of the soul. And in our famine, whatever specific circumstances it entails, God is faithful. Loss, grief, and bitterness are part of the story, but they are not the final story—God brings eternal rescue.

Over five weeks, we will walk together through the four chapters of Ruth, confronted simultaneously by the depth of human suffering and the breadth of God’s faithfulness in that suffering. Ruth’s story gives us certainty about our own. All of history and all of your life—the miraculous and the mundane—points to full and final redemption in Jesus Christ.



HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Each week follows a repeated rhythm to guide you in your study of Hebrews and was crafted with lots of white space and photographic imagery to facilitate a time of reflection on Scripture.

The week begins with an introduction to the themes of the week. Throughout each week you'll find Scripture readings, devotions, and beautiful imagery to guide your time.



WEEK 1 BROKEN

RUTH 1:1-2
sisters' names in verse 1

1 During the time of the judges, there was a famine in the land. A man left Bethlehem in Judah with his wife and two sons to stay in the territory of Moab for a while.¹ The man's name was Elimelech, and he had two sons: Mahan and Chilion. They were Ephraimites from Bethlehem in Judah. They moved the fields of Moab and settled there.

DAY 2 **DISTANT AND DISPLACED**

"It seemed like a good idea at the time." You've probably heard someone say those words, or you may have even said them yourself. It's a popular expression used to cover regret over a decision made with good intentions that ended up having bad results. And if Elimelech had the opportunity to speak on his own behalf in Ruth, he might choose those exact words.

That's the thing about sin—it very often seems right. In Elimelech's case, it may have even seemed necessary. He didn't know much about his family's exact situation, but there was famine in Bethlehem. Famine is any country's common affliction. Even the remote possibility of empty craves or no rice in the grocery store to hand our favorite meals. This was worse. Bethlehem (Hebrew "house of bread" in Hebrew) was named after bread, but there was no bread to be found.

It is likely that Elimelech exhausted numerous potential solutions before packing up and moving to Moab. In taking this view, we can assume the best that Ruth alone. But we should not confuse Elimelech for disbeliever. The latter was willing to faithfully follow God into uncertain territory. The former was unwilling to faithfully remain in the very land Abraham sacrificed everything for God's people to receive. Elimelech turned his back on God's promises and took his family to live among God's enemies.

The hard truth we must consider is that we are more often like Elimelech than we are like Abraham.

Instead of faithfully going or staying wherever the Lord leads us, we are prone to go to those places that seem right in our circumstances—and only then. Sometimes, then, is a byproduct of our sin. Void of prayerful consideration and obedience to God's commands, acting on what seems like a good idea distances us from God and displaces us from our purpose among His people.

24 RUTH

BROKEN 25

Each week includes five days of Scripture reading along with a short devotional thought and three questions to process what you've read.

The Scripture reading is printed out for you with plenty of space for you to take notes, circle, underline, and interact with the passage.



DAY
27

PAUSE & LISTEN

Take a moment to pause and listen to the words of Scripture.

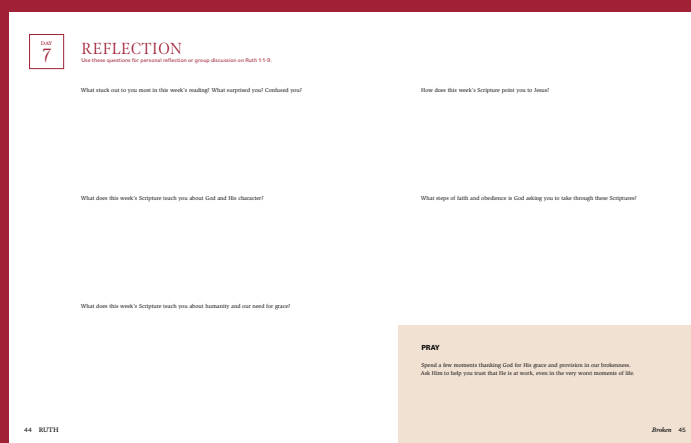
So he asked, "Who are you?"
"I am Ruth, your servant," she replied.
"Take me under your wing, for
you are a family redeemer."
RUTH 3:9

132 RUTH

Refuge 133

The sixth day contains no reading beyond a couple of verses to give you time to pause and listen to what God has said through the Scriptures this week. You may be tempted to skip this day all together, but resist this temptation. Sit and be quiet with God—even if it's only for a few minutes.

The seventh day each week offers a list of open-ended questions that apply to any passage of Scripture. Use this day to reflect on your own or meet with a group to discuss what you've learned. Take intentional time to remember and reflect on what the story of Ruth is teaching you.



44 RUTH

Broken 45



38 RUTH

Broken 39

Throughout each week of study, you will notice callout boxes or supplemental pages provided to give greater context and clarity to the Scripture you're reading. These features will help you connect Ruth to the bigger story of Scripture.

LEADING A GROUP

Each week of study contains a set of questions that can be used for small group meetings. These open-ended questions are meant to guide discussion of the week's Scripture passage. No matter the size of your group, here are some helpful tips for guiding discussion.

PREPARE

REVIEW the Scripture and your answers to the week's questions ahead of time.

PRAY over your group as well as the Scriptures you've been studying. Ask God's Spirit for help to lead the group deeper into God's truth and deeper in relationship with one another.

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

We live in a time when our attention is increasingly divided. Try to see your group time as a space and respite from the digital clutter—from scrolling, notifications, likes, and newsfeeds. Commit to one another to give focused time and attention to the discussion at hand and minimize outside distractions. Help people focus on what's most important: connecting with God, with the Bible, and with one another.

ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION

A good small group experience has the following characteristics.

EVERYONE IS INCLUDED. Your goal is to foster a community where people are welcome just as they are but encouraged to grow spiritually.

EVERYONE PARTICIPATES. Encourage everyone to ask questions, share, or read aloud.

NO ONE DOMINATES. Even though you may be “leading” the group, try to see yourself as a participant steering the conversation rather than a teacher imparting information.

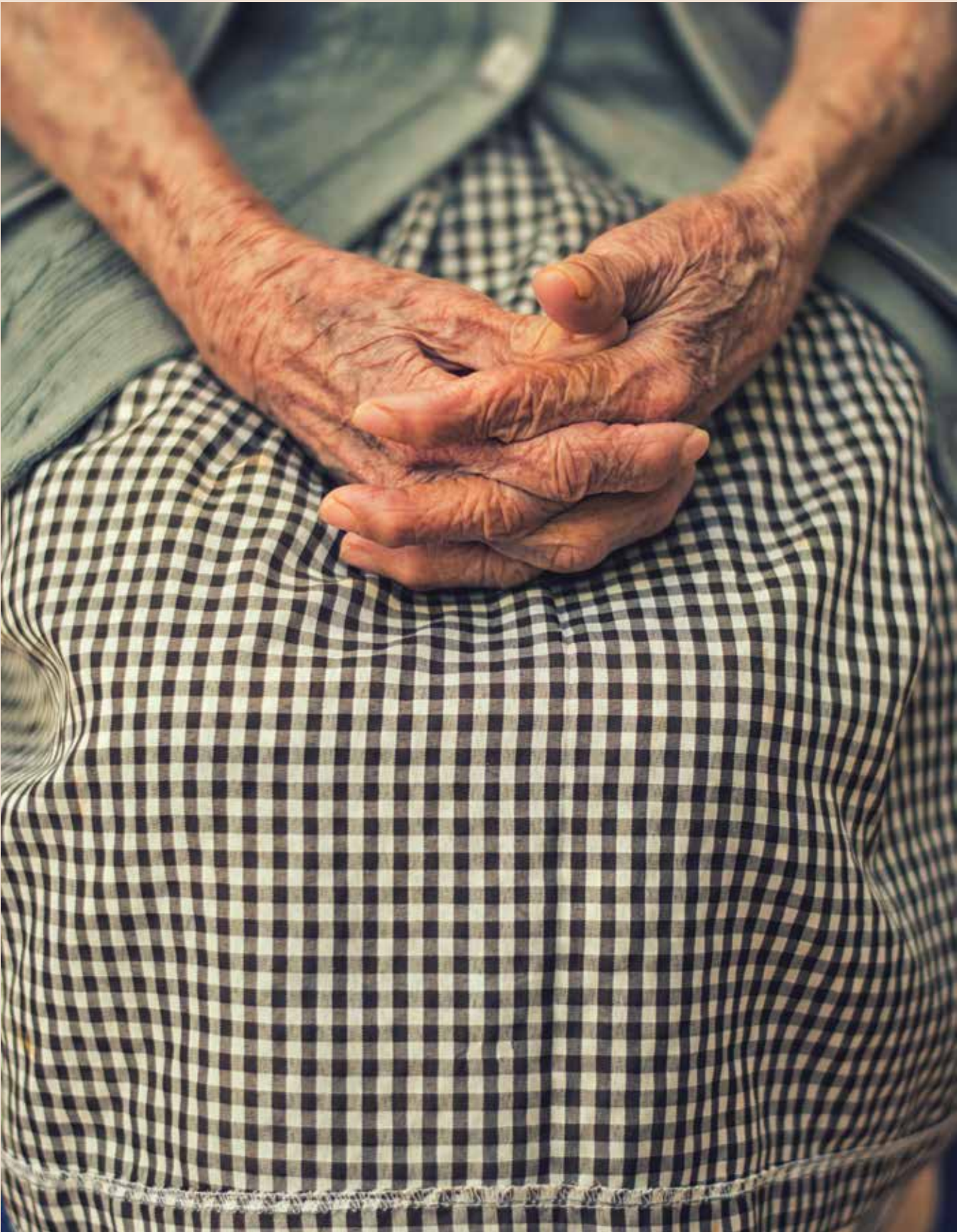
DON'T RUSH. Don't feel that a moment of silence is a bad thing. People may need time, and we should be glad to give it to them. Don't feel like you have to ask all the questions or stay away from questions that aren't included. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and to one another. Take your time.

INPUT IS AFFIRMED AND FOLLOWED UP. Make sure you point out something true or helpful in a response. Don't just move on. Build community with follow-up questions, asking other people to share when they have experienced similar things or how a truth has shaped their understanding of God and the Scripture you're studying. Conversation stalls when people feel that you don't want to hear their answers or that you're looking for only a certain answer. Engagement and affirmation keeps the conversation going.

GOD AND HIS WORD ARE CENTRAL. The questions in this study are meant to steer the conversation back to God, His Word, and the work of the gospel in our lives. Opinions and experiences are valuable and can be helpful, but God is the center of the Bible, the center of our story, and should be the center of our discussion. Trust Him to lead the discussion. Continually point people to the Word and to active steps of faith.

KEEP CONNECTING

Spiritual growth occurs in the context of community. Think of ways to connect with group members during the week. Your group will be more enjoyable the more you get to know one another through time spent outside of an official group meeting. The more people are comfortable with and involved in one another's lives, the more they'll look forward to being together. When people move beyond being friendly to truly being friends who form a community, they come to each session eager to engage instead of merely attending. Reserve time each week to touch base with individual group members.



WEEK 1

BROKEN



Trust that God is at work.

The beginning of Ruth makes us think the book is a horrible tragedy. The middle makes us think it is a beautiful love story. In the end, we discover it is both.

In fact, Ruth's story is a gospel story.

Ruth lived during the time of the judges, when God's people weren't acting at all like God's people. Their motto wasn't all that different from one we hear today. People in Israel were "living their truth," believing that whatever seemed right to a person was, in fact, right for that person.

And there were consequences.

The tragedy that unfolds in the first verses of Ruth illuminates the brokenness of humanity—through the perspective of a single family. Sin's effects are ever-present in the world, not just in a global sense, but in every single, solitary life. Yet, at the very same time, God is at work.

As Ruth's story unfolds, we will see that the tragedy of sin and its consequences are met with grace and provision from God. Ruth's story will reveal to us the extent of God's grace. This is good news, because the God we meet in the book of Ruth is exactly who God is throughout time and circumstance. No matter what's happening in our lives, God meets us there and draws us to Himself.

But to participate with Him in that story, we must first recognize our brokenness.

RUTH 1:1a

NAOMI'S FAMILY IN MOAB

¹During the time of the judges, there was a famine in the land.

JUDGES 21:25

²⁵In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did whatever seemed right to him.

DAY

1

A FAMINE OF THE SOUL

Faithfulness is a personal choice we each must make.

Joshua knew it, and at the end of his earthly life, he said it out loud. The Israelites needed to make a choice: who they would serve—the One true God who keeps every promise or the pagan gods of the world whose promises are only shadows (see Joshua 24:15). At Joshua’s call, the people agreed to serve the Lord, but that choice didn’t last. Within a generation, they had once again lost their way.

This is the spiritual context in which Ruth takes place. This famine didn’t occur in a time when God’s people were faithfully following Him. This wasn’t a “Why do bad things happen to good people?” type of situation. The book’s opening phrase, “During the time of the judges,” informs us that the events in Ruth took place during one of the darkest times in Israel’s history, when “Everyone did what seemed right to him.”

In other words, all people had chosen their own way instead of God’s way. They were sinning and unrepentant—and they were facing the consequences of those choices. It is likely that the famine was part of God’s judgment on His people for abandoning Him to worship other gods (see Judges 2:11-15).

The situation in Ruth informs us about our own: what *seems* right to us is wrong. We all have sin in our lives that carries unavoidable and devastating consequences—a famine of the soul that ends in certain death. We are broken in a way that no improvement of circumstance can fix.

Yet, as we will see across the pages of Ruth’s story, God faithfully provides the way. And the call to turn to Him in faith remains, even the darkest, most difficult days.

You are broken in a way that no
improvement of circumstance can fix.



REFLECTIONS

What was the underlying problem in “the time of the judges”?

What choice did God’s people have in the famine of Ruth 1:1?

How do Judges 21:25 and Ruth 1:1a apply to your life? What choices have been placed before you?

INSIGHTS

The story of Ruth is more than a story about a broken girl who meets a heroic boy and lives happily ever after. It, like every book in the Bible, is a story about God’s plan to rescue every person from the brokenness of sin through the life, death, and resurrection of the one and only true Hero of the world—Jesus Christ. We should not wait until the end of the book of Ruth to consider Jesus as part of the story. He is the central point of the story from verse 1. We need a Savior, and God’s plan in every circumstance throughout history is to redeem us.

RUTH 1:1-2

NAOMI'S FAMILY IN MOAB

1 During the time of the judges, there was a famine in the land. A man left Bethlehem in Judah with his wife and two sons to stay in the territory of Moab for a while. ² The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife's name was Naomi. The names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They entered the fields of Moab and settled there.

DISTANT AND DISPLACED

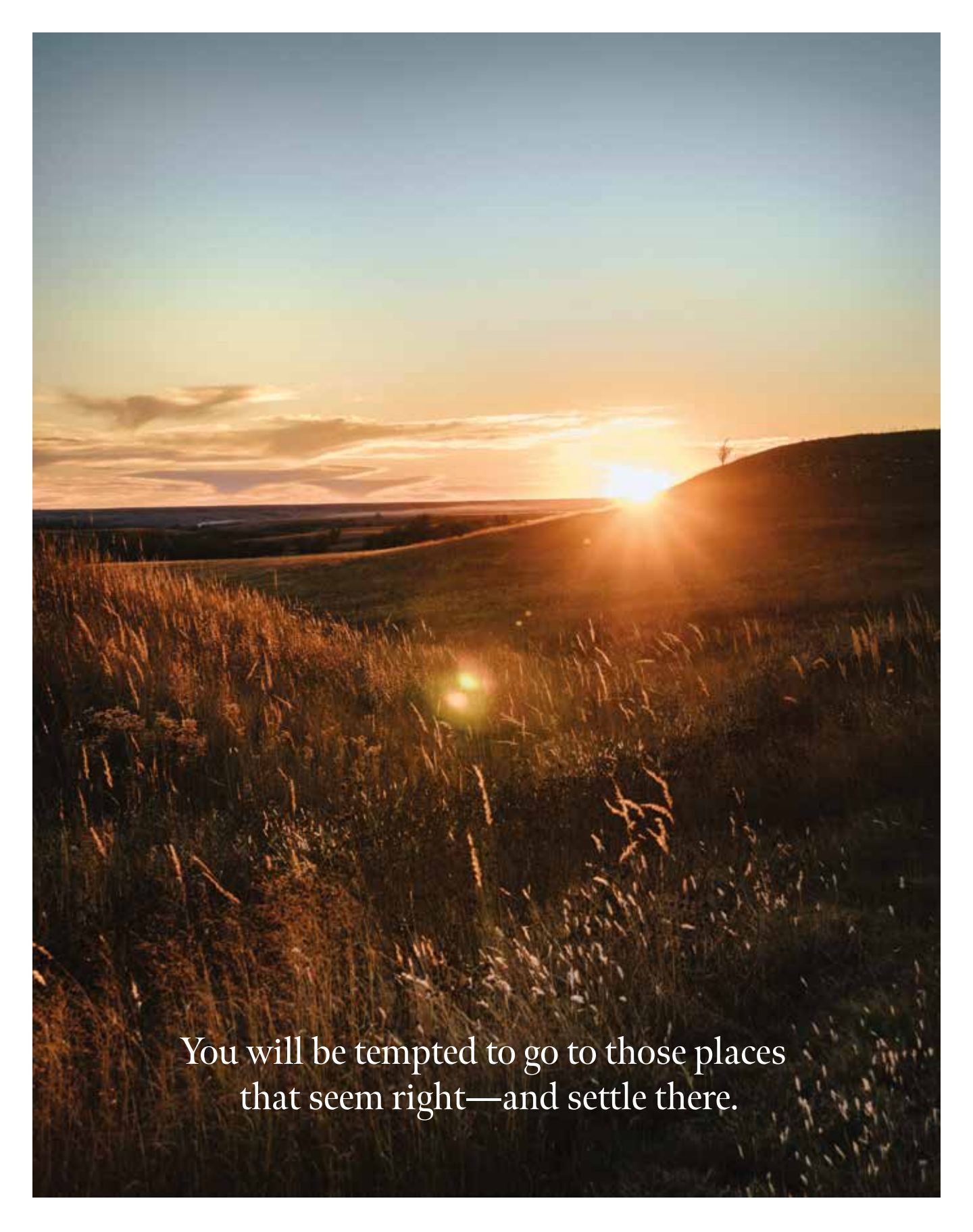
“It seemed like a good idea at the time.” You’ve probably heard someone say those words, or you may have even said them yourself. It’s a popular expression used to voice regret over a decision made with good intentions that ended up having bad results. And if Elimelech had the opportunity to speak on his own behalf in Ruth, he might choose those same words.

That’s the thing about sin—it very often seems right. In Elimelech’s case, it may have even seemed necessary. We don’t know much about his family’s exact situation, but there was famine in Bethlehem. Famine in any context causes apprehension. Even the remote possibility of scarcity causes us to race to the grocery store to hoard our favorite snacks. This was worse. Bethlehem (literally “House of Bread” in Hebrew) was named after bread, but there was no bread to be found.

It is likely that Elimelech exhausted numerous potential solutions before packing up and moving to Moab. In taking this view, we can assume the best that Ruth allows. But we should not confuse Elimelech for Abraham. The latter was willing to faithfully follow God into uncertain territory. The former was unwilling to faithfully remain in the very land Abraham sacrificed everything for God’s people to receive. Elimelech turned his back on God’s promises and took his family to live among God’s enemies.

The hard truth we must consider is that we are more often like Elimelech than we are like Abraham.

Instead of faithfully going or staying wherever the Lord leads us, we are prone to go to those places that seem right in our circumstances—and *settle* there. Brokenness, then, is a byproduct of our sin. Void of prayerful consideration and obedience to God’s commands, acting on what seems like a good idea distances us from God and displaces us from our purpose among His people.

A landscape photograph capturing a sunset over rolling hills. The sun is a bright, glowing orb on the horizon, partially obscured by a ridge on the right. It casts a warm, golden light across the sky, which transitions from a pale blue at the top to a deep orange near the horizon. Wispy clouds are scattered across the sky, catching the low light. The foreground is filled with tall, dark grasses, some of which are backlit by the sun, creating a shimmering effect. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

You will be tempted to go to those places
that seem right—and settle there.

REFLECTIONS

What does Elimelech's willingness to move his family from Bethlehem to Moab reveal about his faith?

Elimelech only planned to stay in Moab "for a while." Are sinful choices justified if we commit them only "for a while"? In what situations have you been tempted to think that way?

What are your "fields of Moab," those places you have settled that invite distance from God?

TRACING THE STORY

Elimelech's decision to move must be understood in light of the long held hostility between Israel and Moab. The origin of the Moabites was a horrific low point in Israel's history (see Genesis 19:36-37). And their story of resistance, seduction, and oppression had only continued to bring additional low points for God's chosen people, to the point that Moab was excluded from the assembly of the Lord (see Deuteronomy 23:3-6; Numbers 22-24; 25:1-9; Judges 3:15-30).

RUTH 1:3-5

³ Naomi's husband, Elimelech, died, and she was left with her two sons.

⁴ Her sons took Moabite women as their wives: one was named Orpah and the second was named Ruth. After they lived in Moab about ten years,

⁵ both Mahlon and Chilion also died, and the woman was left without her two children and without her husband.

VULNERABLE AND ALONE

The situation in the first five verses of Ruth moves from bad to worse to tragic.

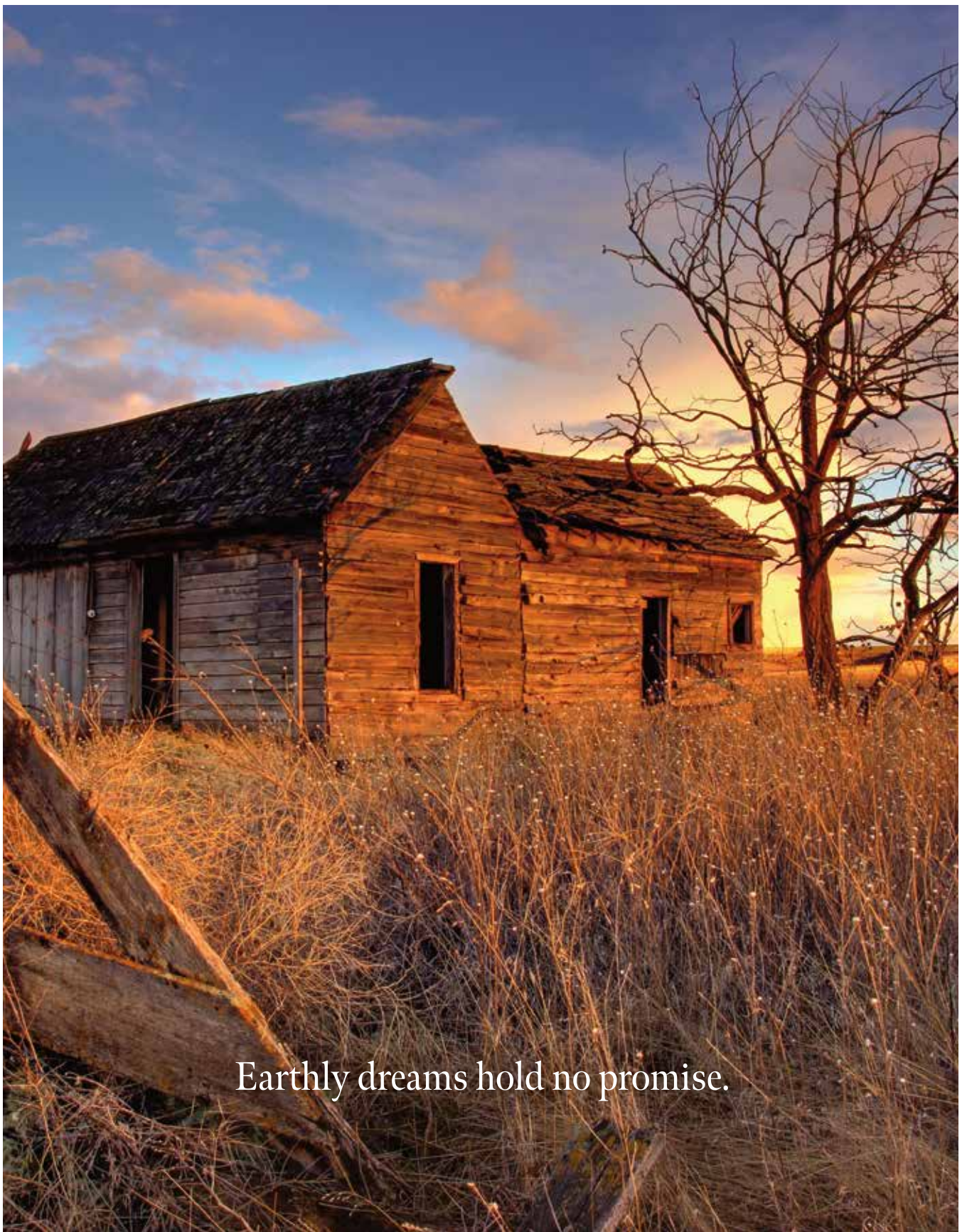
After distancing and displacing his family, Elimelech died. Whatever dreams he had peddled that Naomi began to embrace along the way to Moab were quickly lost. Naomi found herself a single mom in a strange place where there was no natural spiritual or relational community for her to find like-minded friends. There were no Hebrew women for her sons to marry, and Jewish law prohibited them from marrying Moabites, since Moabites served other gods (see Deuteronomy 7:3-4).

We don't know how long it was just the three of them, but they continued to do what seemed right in their own eyes. Mahlon and Chilion took Moabite wives named Ruth and Orpah, and the family settled in Moab for ten years. They made a life there—this was no longer a temporary visit.

But before any new dreams of life in Moab could gain traction, both Mahlon and Chilion died. Now, Naomi was experiencing heartache and loss with the added difficulty of being a widow. In those days, widows were among the most vulnerable people in society. Naomi had limited resources, no financial stability, no descendants, and no hope for the future. Elimelech's choice to do what seemed right to him eventually resulted in the death of 75 percent of his family and what seemed like worse than death to the rest.

Naomi's story is included in the pages of Scripture for this very reason. For us to understand the gospel's power in our lives, we must come to terms with our desperate need—a need that only God can remedy. Earthly dreams hold no promise. When we do what seems right in our own eyes and make a life for ourselves there, it moves from bad to worse to tragic. Romans 6:23 explains it like this: "For the wages of sin is death." In other words, eternal death is the eventual outcome of every sin.

But Romans 6:23 also offers the hope that Ruth will ultimately illuminate: "but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Apart from Christ, you are wholly vulnerable and alone in the consequences of sin. But in Christ, you are wholly protected and embraced in the power of God's faithfulness and love.



Earthly dreams hold no promise.

REFLECTIONS

What potential reasons are there to explain why Naomi and her two sons stayed in Moab after Elimelech died?

What are some temporary solutions you have made for problems that turned into something permanent? What has God taught you through that experience?

What role and responsibility do we have as believers in Christ when it comes to continuing faithfully in tragic circumstances?

RUTH 1:6-7

RUTH'S LOYALTY TO NAOMI

⁶ She and her daughters-in-law set out to return from the territory of Moab, because she had heard in Moab that the LORD had paid attention to his people's need by providing them food. ⁷ She left the place where she had been living, accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, and traveled along the road leading back to the land of Judah.

GRIEF AND GRACE

Sometimes when life hits hard, you just want to go home.

Naomi was in that place. She'd given Moab a full decade of her life, and it couldn't have been worse. There was no end to her troubles in sight, either. Living in a foreign land without a husband or sons, the situation was precarious. Naomi and her two daughters-in-law didn't have anything to their names or a way to provide for themselves. In those days, women went from the care of their fathers to the care of their husbands. If a woman's husband died, his family was responsible for providing another male relative for her to marry—that is, if the woman was still of age to be married and have children.

This was not the case for Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth. They left Moab to return to Bethlehem for food, not husbands. Naomi had heard things were looking up again in Judah and, as risky as a journey like that would have been, the three women began the long trek over rough and steep terrain back to Bethlehem.

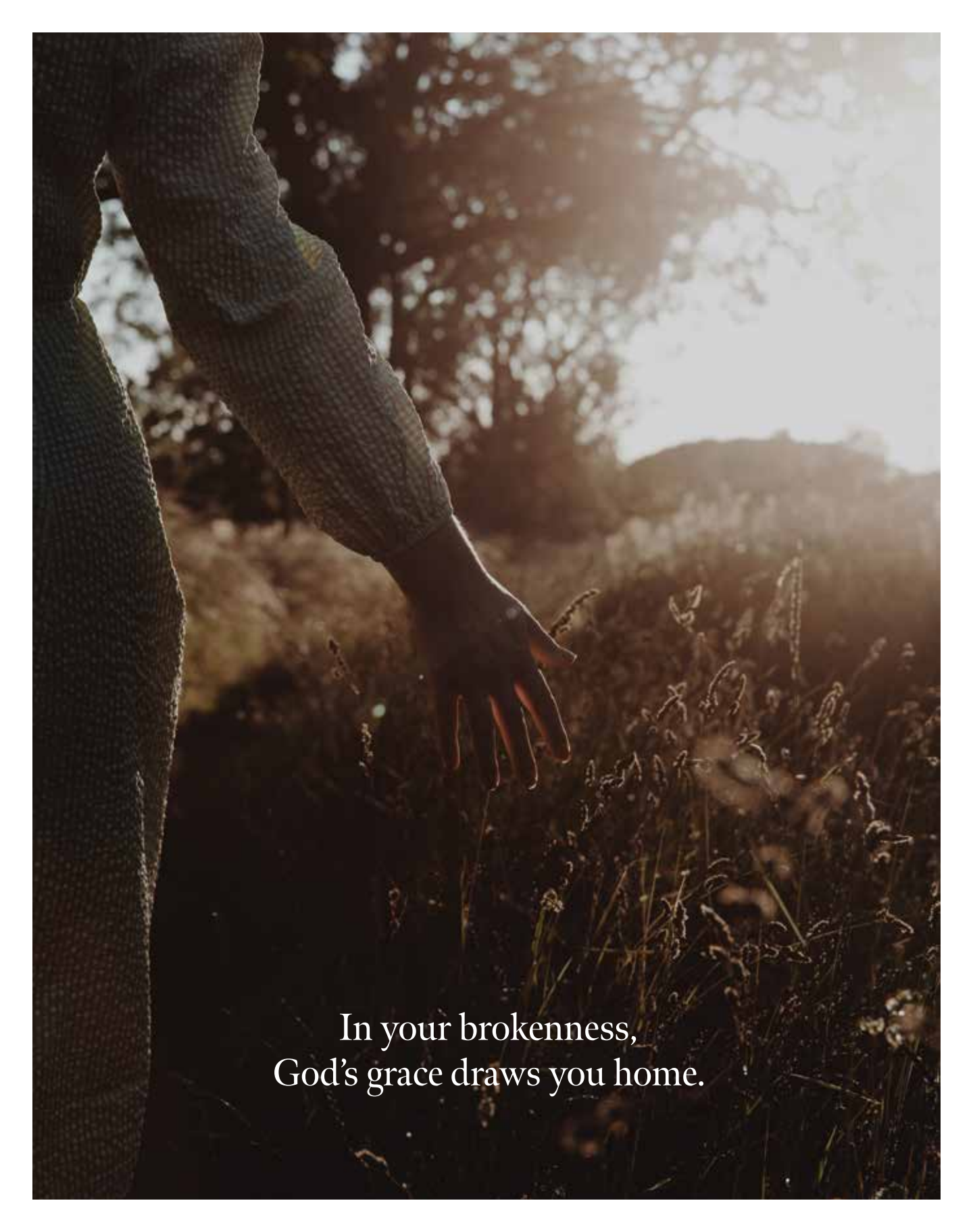
To this point, people have been the subject of the book of Ruth—terribly flawed people at that. In verse 6, we see the first sign of God at work among them. In their grief, God showed grace.

There was grace in the hearing. In Naomi's state of mind and heart, it was a gift of God that she could hear and perceive good news of any kind.

There was grace in the physical aid. This was still the period of the judges, when people "did whatever seemed right" (Judges 21:25) in their own way of thinking. Yet God provided food in the famine.

And He provided that food for His people (see v. 6). There was grace in the loyalty God showed to disloyal people, in the keeping of the covenant with covenant-breakers.

Naomi's attitude hadn't yet caught up with her physical movement, but God was leading her home, to the place of redemption. And He does the same for us. In our brokenness, God's grace draws us toward our home with Him.

A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's arm and hand reaching out towards a field of tall, dry grass. The person is wearing a grey, textured sweater. The background is a soft-focus landscape with trees and hills under a warm, golden light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

In your brokenness,
God's grace draws you home.

REFLECTIONS

After the devastating decade in Moab, where Naomi lost everything, why would she risk the dangers of traveling back to Bethlehem?

What have you expected of God during times of intense grief?

What grace has God shown you in those times?

God in Our BROKENNESS

The Lord is explicitly recognized only briefly in this week's passage. However, God's presence and activity is central to Ruth's story. Every detail in Ruth connects to the bigger story of Scripture—God faithfully reaching into our brokenness to draw us back to Him. To see how the story of Ruth echoes the whole story of Scripture, consider these passages that align with this week's reading.

RUTH 1:1a

God responds to human rebellion.

PROVERBS 14:12; ROMANS 5:12; ROMANS 8:20-21

RUTH 1:1b-2

*God's discipline is for our ultimate good.
Any attempt to escape it is continued rebellion.*

PSALM 139:7-8,23-24; ROMANS 8:23-25; HEBREWS 12:5-13

RUTH 1:3-5

*God's commands are not arbitrary. There is no sin
where circumstance absolves us of consequence.*

DEUTERONOMY 7:1-4; 1 SAMUEL 15:22; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:34; GALATIANS 6:7-8

RUTH 1:6,8-9

God provides in our brokenness.

PSALM 34:18; PSALM 146:5-9; 2 TIMOTHY 2:13

RUTH 1:7

In our brokenness, God invites us to return to Him.

JOB 22:23a; ZECHARIAH 1:3; LUKE 15; ROMANS 2:4

RUTH 1:8-9

⁸ Naomi said to them, “Each of you go back to your mother’s home. May the LORD show kindness to you as you have shown to the dead and to me. ⁹ May the LORD grant each of you rest in the house of a new husband.” She kissed them, and they wept loudly.

DAY

5

WITHDRAWAL AND WEEPING

Where verses 6-7 offer our first hint of hope in Ruth, verses 8-9 quickly return us to the depths of despair. It's no surprise, though. That's the way grief goes.

In her brokenness, Naomi was surely grateful for Ruth and Orpah's empathetic presence. Initially, she may have thought the three women could get through it together. Theirs were hands to hold. But as Naomi walked along the road, she began to emotionally withdraw. As an older woman far from home, her situation was different. She decided to carry the burden alone.

Thinking Ruth and Orpah's only shot at any future happiness was to return to their fathers and try to remarry in Moab, Naomi told them to go home. And according to every standard at the time, Naomi wasn't wrong. It had cost her everything to leave home, and she didn't want Ruth and Naomi to continue down the same tragic path. Naomi thought the two young women still had lives worth living—even if she didn't.

The brokenness of their lives hit them hard in that moment. Naomi was releasing their hands from holding hers any longer, and they wept.

They wept for the tragedy of death in their families. They wept because things didn't turn out how they imagined. They wept because they were enduring ongoing personal trauma. They wept in deep compassion for one another. They wept because it all seemed so unfair.

Can you relate? When we realize our brokenness—whether because of personal sin or sin's effects in the world—God meets us in the middle of it all (see Psalm 34:18). And as His people, we are called to meet each other there too (see Romans 12:15). We are tempted to withdraw in our weeping, but God invites us to connect and unite. The truth is, we are all broken people. Together, we will see and believe He is at work.

A photograph of a vast field of red poppies in full bloom. The flowers are vibrant red with dark centers, growing on green stems. The field stretches towards a distant horizon where a line of trees is visible under a pale, clear sky. The lighting is soft, suggesting a calm day.

The Lord meets you in the
middle of your brokenness.
You can meet others there too.

REFLECTIONS

What do Naomi's words in verses 8-9 demonstrate about her belief in God even in the worst of times?

When you are feeling broken, do you tend to withdraw from God and people or connect and unite with God and people? Why?

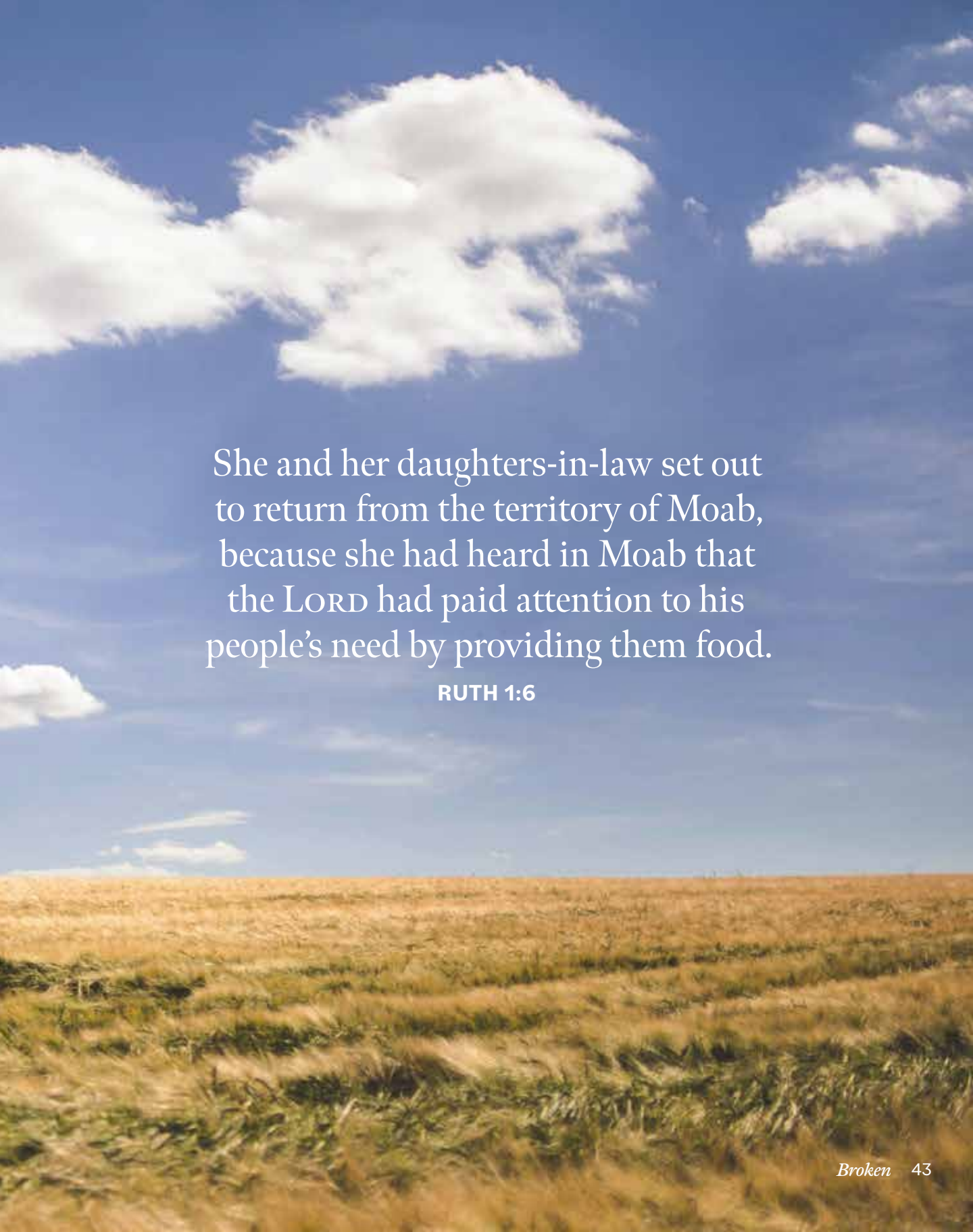
Why does healing from brokenness require us to connect and unite with God? Why does healing from brokenness require us to connect and unite with other people emotionally, socially, physically, mentally, and spiritually?

DAY

6

PAUSE & LISTEN

Spend some time reflecting over the week's reading.



She and her daughters-in-law set out
to return from the territory of Moab,
because she had heard in Moab that
the LORD had paid attention to his
people's need by providing them food.

RUTH 1:6

REFLECTION

Use these questions for personal reflection or group discussion on Ruth 1:1-9.

What stuck out to you most in this week's reading? What surprised you? Confused you?

What does this week's Scripture teach you about God and His character?

What does this week's Scripture teach you about humanity and our need for grace?

How does this week's Scripture point you to Jesus?

What steps of faith and obedience is God asking you to take through these Scriptures?

PRAY

Spend a few moments thanking God for His grace and provision in our brokenness.
Ask Him to help you trust that He is at work, even in the very worst moments of life.