

*Series:* The Book of Ruth; *Sermon:* **The Redeemer**; *Date:* **June 17, 2018**  
*Delivered by:* **Rev. Eric Channing**, pastor of congregational care and family ministries

***Bible text explored: Ruth 1:1–7***

<sup>1</sup>In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. <sup>2</sup>The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. <sup>3</sup>But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup>These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, <sup>5</sup>and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

<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. [ESV]

***Review and application:***

*This compact narrative, set at a low point in Israel's history, begins as the story of one family hitting bottom. But its implications are profound and universal.*

1. What (vv. 1-5) are some characteristics of the era in Israel's early history when it was ruled by judges? (For a summary, see *Judg.21:25*.)  
What drove Elimelech's family to abandon Bethlehem ("House of Bread") for neighboring Moab?  
How did Naomi evaluate the succession of tragedies she endured? (See *Ruth 1:20-21*.)
2. Why will life in a fallen world often seem empty?  
When I encounter unexpected hardships, should I assume divine abandonment or punishment is the cause?  
When I feel broken, am I willing . . .  
    . . . to admit it to the Lord?  
    . . . to ask others for help?  
When I observe others having a hard time . . .  
    . . . have I ever reached out to lend a hand?  
    . . . can I look for ways to be a helper?  
(See *1 Cor. 12:26*; *2 Cor. 1:3-4*.)
3. What (vv. 6-7) was Naomi's first clue that God had not abandoned her?  
How did she respond?
4. When life seems hopeless, can I still trust God, to be working out his purposes in my life in ways that fit into his grand plan of redemption?