RUTH 1

EXEGETICAL

Having journeyed, during a time of famine, out of Bethlehem into Moab where her husband and two sons died, Naomi’s report, upon her return home to Bethlehem with her loyal daughter-in-law, Ruth witnessed that God had made her life bitter by bringing her back empty (of the protection and provision of a husband and sons), though she arrived at the time of First Fruits.

1. Faced with a famine in the time of the Judges (21:25), Naomi’s journeying, with her husband and sons, from Bethlehem to sojourn in Moab, where both her husband and her sons died left her unprotected and unprovided for, (1-5).
   1. Confronted with famine in the time of the Judges, a man’s journey from Bethlehem, along with his wife and two sons, brought him and his family to sojourn in Moab, (1-2).
   2. After Elimelech, the man from Bethlehem, died in Moab and his two sons, who had married the Moabite women Orpah and Ruth, died ten years after their father, Naomi’s situation in life found her with two daughters-in-law and no one to protect or provide for her, (3-5).

II. The rumor which Naomi heard in Moab, that the LORD had provided bread for His people, precipitated Naomi’s preparations, with her daughters-in-law, to return home to Bethlehem (the house of bread), (6).

III. Ruth’s declaration of loyalty to Naomi caused Naomi to stop and try to dissuade her from continuing, but finally to consent to Ruth’s journeying home with her to Bethlehem, (7-18).

1. Naomi’s leaving Moab to return home to Judah commenced with both her daughters-in law, (7).
2. The response of the daughters-in-law to Naomi’s appeal that the two women to go back to Moab, asking God to show them loyalty because of the loyalty they had shown and to give them security in marriage, announced their refusal to go back, promising to go back with her, (8-10),
3. The responses of the daughters-in-law after Naomi had reasoned with them that it would be better for them to return to Moab because life with her was too bitter since the LORD was against her, were that Orpah turned back to Moab, but Ruth attached herself to Naomi, (11-14).
4. After Naomi again failed to convince Ruth to return with her sister-in-law to her own people and her own gods, with the result that Ruth pledged her loyalty to Naomi, Naomi’s efforts to dissuade Ruth sopped, (15-18).
5. Naomi’s witness to the women of Bethlehem, after she arrived home in “the House of Bread,” testified

that God had turned her sweetness into bitterness by bringing her back empty (without protection and

provision), (19-21).

* 1. The journeying of the two women brought them to Bethlehem, (19a).
  2. The arrival of the two women caused the women of the city to identify Naomi (“my sweetness”), (19b).
  3. Naomi’s denial that she was “my sweetness,” witnessed instead that she was Mara (“bitter”), since Shaddai had made her life bitter, (20).
  4. Naomi’s witness to the women of Bethlehem testified that the LORD had afflicted her, that Shaddai had brought misfortune upon her, by allowing her to go out full (of men to protect and provide for her), but then bringing her back empty, (21).

1. Naomi’s return to the “House of Bread” with Ruth the Moabitess ironically coincided with the beginning of the barley harvest (First Fruits – Promise), (22).

**THEOLOGICAL**

**Returning to God’s Place of Blessing Promises Protection in and Provision for Life’s Pain**

I. Moving away from God’s place of blessing multiplies the pain of life, (1-5).

1. A realization of God’s care invites the wanderer back to God’s place of blessing, (6).
2. Returning to God’s place of blessing begins the process of healing life’s pain, (7-18).

IV. Returning to God’s place of blessing does not guarantee an accurate understanding of God’s individual care, (19-21).

V. The promise of blessing awaits those who return to God’s place of blessing, (22).

HOMILETICAL

The best way to deal with life pain is to…

**Come back close to God.**

I. OUR LIVES ARE OFTEN PLAGUED WITH PAIN, (1a).

- The pain of famine plagues us.

- The pain of family plagues us.

- The pain of death plagues us.

- The pain of loneliness plagues us.

II. IN OUR PAIN WE ARE TEMPTED TO ABANDON THE PLACE OF GOD’S BLESSING, (1B-2).

* + We abandon family.
  + We abandon fellowship with God’s people.
  + We abandon fellowship with God.
  + We look for healing from pain elsewhere.

III. WHEN WE ABANDON THE PLACE OF BLESSING THE PAIN OF LIFE MULTIPLIES (3-5).

IV. IN OUR PAIN GOD OFFERS THE PROMISE OF HOPE TO INVITE US BACK TO THE PLACE OF BLESSING, (6).

V. WHEN WE ABANDON THE PLACE OF BLESSING WE OFTEN LOSE PERSPECTIVE, (7-18 & 19-22).

- We don’t see God’s PROTECTION.

- We don’t see God’s PROVISION.

- We don’t see God’s PROMISE, (22).

VI. COME BACK CLOSE TO GOD.

* + God’s care invites you back to Him.
  + God’s promise of blessing awaits your return.
  + Staying close to God helps heal life’s pain.

Sample Exegetical Outline and Proposition

Luke 18:1-8

EXEGETICAL OUTLINE

[The CONTEXT of Jesus’ parable to His disciples concerning persistent prayer was the coming distress they would experience in this life before Jesus’ return, (17”22-37)].

1. The PURPOSE for Jesus’ parable to His disciples was to encourage them to persist in prayer, (1).
2. The BEHAVIOR of the unjust judge (in contrast to God’s behavior as judge) was that He did not fear or care about anyone, (2).
3. The BEHAVIOR of the widow (as an example for the disciples) was that she persistently petitioned the judge for justice, (3).
4. The DELAYED granting of justice to the widow by the judge (in contrast to God’s swift granting of justice to those who pray) came, not because He feared or cared, but because He wearied of the Widow’s persistence, (4-5).
5. The CONTRAST between the unjust judge and God was that, because He cares, God brings, “swift” justice of His people who cry out to Him, (7-8b).
6. The PURPOSE for Jesus’ parable to His disciples was to encourage His disciples, through the use of a rhetorical question, to persist in prayer, until His return, (8b).

EXEGETICAL PROPOSITION

**The purpose for Jesus’ parable of**

**the persistent widow**

**as told to His disciples**

**was to encourage them**

**to persist in prayer**

**Sample Theological Outline and Proposition**

**Luke 18:1-8**

**THEOLOGICAL OUTLINE**

1. Times of distress demand persistence in prayer, (17:22-18:1).
2. Praying with persistence wins divine deliverance, (2-8a).
3. God’s expectation of faith at Christ’s return elicits persistent prayers of faith, (8b).

THEOLOGICAL PROPOSITION

**God’s timely deliverance comes to those**

**who persist in prayer**