



**Sermon Title: "Dark Shadows of Blessed Providence"**

**Scripture: Ruth 1**

Pastor Chris Fritz

Sunday, November 6, 2022

## INTRODUCTION

### I. FIVE SHADOWS IN FIVE VERSES

#### Ruth 1:1-5 -

- 1) These are the dark days of the Judges.
- 2) This is a time of great famine and economic disaster.
- 3) Elimelech and his family moved OUT OF (AWAY FROM!) the Promised Land.
- 4) After moving to Moab, Naomi's husband died.
- 5) Naomi's two sons die, leaving no child (no descendant) to "carry on" the family name.

### II. THREE HEART-REVEALING CONVERSATIONS

**Conversation #1** - Naomi's General Counsel to Orpah and Ruth (verses 6-10)

**Conversation #2** - Naomi's Strong Admonishment to Orpah and Ruth (verses 11-15)

*2 Corinthians 1:8-9 -*

Note: Naomi is putting before Ruth "the cost" of going with her, "the cost" of following her.

**Conversation #3** - Ruth's Startling and Beautiful Confession (verses 16-18)

Note: Based on the chiasmic structure and use of verbs, Ruth is not so much declaring what she will do, but she's confessing what has already happened!

### III. THE JOYOUS AND HEARTBREAKING RETURN TO BETHLEHEM

#### Ruth 1:19 -

Note: The Hebrew word translated as “stirred” denotes a joyous stirring!

Note: All this joy and excitement feels like yet another “stab” in the back to Naomi.

#### Ruth 1:20-21 -

Note: Naomi goes back and forth calling God “ALMIGHTY” (Shaddai, Genesis 17:1-2) and “LORD” (Yahweh/I AM, Exodus 3:13-15). Naomi is acknowledging the power/might of God and the fact that she is in a covenant relationship with God.

*Hebrews 4:16 -*

#### Ruth 1:22 -

Note: Our God is the God of small details; nothing falls outside the reign of His sovereignty!

### Two Closing Thoughts to Chew On...

- 1) We can be confident in God’s good, ultimate purposes for us, His people.
- 2) We must learn to interpret our present circumstances by means of the cross.

### Questions for Further Study, Reflection, and Application...

1. What are the hard and painful details that we see in Naomi’s life?
2. Why does Naomi decide to return to Israel? Why does she encourage her daughters-in-law to stay?
3. Why does Ruth refuse to leave Naomi? What does Ruth’s answer/confession reveal?
4. When Naomi returns to Bethlehem, what does she say about God? What is correct about what she says? What is incorrect about what she says?
5. “*We must learn to interpret our present circumstances by means of the cross.*” What does this mean? How can we practically do this?