

God's Underdogs (Naomi): When We've Lost It All

The Book of Ruth

1. When we've lost it all, we [second-guess our decisions](#).

📖 *Ruth 1:1–2 (NIV) “In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. ² The man’s name was Elimelech, his wife’s name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.”*

📖 *Ruth 1:3–5 (NIV) “Now Elimelech, Naomi’s husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. ⁴ They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, ⁵ both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.”*

📖 *Ruth 1:6–7 (NIV) “When she heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of His people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. ⁷ With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.”*

2. When we've lost it all, we [lose hope and push people away](#).

📖 *Ruth 1:8–14 (NIV) “Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home. May the Lord show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me. ⁹ May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband.” Then she kissed them and they wept aloud ¹⁰ and said to her, “We will go back with you to your people.” ¹¹ But Naomi said, “Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? ¹² Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons— ¹³ would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord’s hand has gone out against me!” ¹⁴ At this they wept again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her.”*

📖 *Ruth 1:15–18 (NIV) “Look,” said Naomi, “your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.” ¹⁶ But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.” ¹⁸ When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.”*

3. When we've lost it all, we [become bitter and resentful](#).

📖 *Ruth 1:19–22 (NIV) “So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?” ²⁰ “Don’t call me Naomi,” she told them. “Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. ²¹ I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.” ²² So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.”*

4. When we've lost it all, we [label God's providence as coincidence](#).

📖 *Ruth 2:1–6 (NIV)* “Now Naomi had a relative on her husband’s side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz. ² And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, “Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor.” Naomi said to her, “Go ahead, my daughter.” ³ So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech. ⁴ Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, “The Lord be with you!” “The Lord bless you!” they called back. ⁵ Boaz asked the foreman of his harvesters, “Whose young woman is that?” ⁶ The foreman replied, “She is the Moabitess who came back from Moab with Naomi.”

📖 *Ruth 2:8–12 (NIV)* “So Boaz said to Ruth, “My daughter, listen to me. Don’t go and glean in another field and don’t go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls. ⁹ Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the girls. I have told the men not to touch you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.” ¹⁰ At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She exclaimed, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?” ¹¹ Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. ¹² May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.”


5. When we've lost it all, we [discover that risk is our only option](#).

📖 *Ruth 3:1–4 (NIV)* “One day Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, should I not try to find a home for you, where you will be well provided for? ² Is not Boaz, with whose servant girls you have been, a kinsman of ours? Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. ³ Wash and perfume yourself, and put on your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don’t let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴ When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do.”


📖 *Ruth 3:8–14 (NIV)* “In the middle of the night something startled the man, and he turned and discovered a woman lying at his feet. ⁹ “Who are you?” he asked. “I am your servant Ruth,” she said. “Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a kinsman-redeemer.” ¹⁰ “The Lord bless you, my daughter,” he replied. “This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. ¹¹ And now, my daughter, don’t be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of noble character. ¹² Although it is true that I am near of kin, there is a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I. ¹³ Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to redeem, good; let him redeem. But if he is not willing, as surely as the Lord lives I will do it. Lie here until morning.” ¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before anyone could be recognized; and he said, “Don’t let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor.”


📖 *Ruth 4:1–6 (NIV)* “Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat there. When the kinsman-redeemer he had mentioned came along, Boaz said, “Come over here, my friend, and sit down.” So he went over and sat down. ² Boaz took ten of the elders of the town and said, “Sit here,” and they did so. ³ Then he said to the kinsman-redeemer, “Naomi, who has come back from Moab, is selling the piece of land that belonged to our brother Elimelech. ⁴ I thought I should bring the matter to your attention and suggest that you buy it in the presence of these seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, do so. But if you will not, tell me, so I will know. For no one has the right to do it except you, and I am next in line.” “I will redeem it,” he said. ⁵ Then Boaz said, “On the day you buy

the land from Naomi and from Ruth the Moabitess, you acquire the dead man's widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property.”⁶ At this, the kinsman-redeemer said, “Then I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it.”

 *Ruth 4:9–10 (NIV) “Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, “Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion (kilyōn) and Mahlon (Machlōn).¹⁰ I have also acquired Ruth the Moabitess, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from the town records. Today you are witnesses!”*

6. When we've lost it all, we [will eventually see redemption.](#)

 *Ruth 4:13–16 (NIV) “So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. Then he went to her, and the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.¹⁴ The women said to Naomi: “Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel!¹⁵ He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.”¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap, and cared for him.”*

 *Ruth 4:17 (NIV) “The women living there said, “Naomi has a son.” And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.”*

Describe a time when you second-guessed a decision you made. What did that decision cost you? What should we do when bad things pile on? Why do you think we push people away when we are hurting? Do you still believe in coincidence? Are you a person that takes risks? What is the last risk you took for God? Have you ever regretted saying no to God? Have you ever regretted saying yes to God? Redemption is a recurring theme in the Scriptures, is redemption a recurring theme in your life?

