



# THE MESSENGER

## AUGUST 18, 2024

### NEWS AND NOTES

#### **Congregational Meeting**

November 10

#### **Our Next Gospel Meeting**

October 6-11

#### **Weekly Bible Studies**

Thursday at 1:15 on Zoom

#### **Times of Service**

##### **Sunday**

Bible study: 9:45 AM

Worship: 10:45 AM; 6 PM

##### **Wednesday**

Bible study: 7:30 PM

(Immediately followed by a short worship service)

#### **First Friday of Month**

##### **Singing**

September 6

#### **Address and Contact**

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### “THERE WAS A FAMINE IN THE LAND”

Elimelech packed up his family and took them to Moab as a result of a famine impacting Bethlehem and the surrounding areas. (Ruth 1:1)

Famines can devastate agrarian societies. God would use famine as a means of punishing his people when they turned away from him. (Deuteronomy 28) While there is no reason to believe every famine that happens is God punishing a people, it would not be surprising if such were the case in this instance as we recall the events described took place during the spiritually dark days of the Judges. (1:1a)

Some have questioned Elimelech’s commitment to God based upon his decision to go to Moab. God spoke against allowing an Ammonite or Moabite to “enter the assembly”, along with reasons why, in Deuteronomy 23:3-4. In addition, Mahlon and Chilion, Elimelech’s sons, took Moabite women as wives. While there was no formal prohibition against doing this, there was a long history of trouble with Moab to go along with the 10-generation declaration of Deuteronomy 23. Whether it is fair to question Elimelech’s faithfulness or not, the decision was made and the family went to Moab. What began as a temporary “sojourn” (1:1) became more permanent as they “remained there” for ten years. (1:2, 5)

These ten years became the worst years of Naomi’s life. Elimelech and her two sons died. Elimelech’s decision to move his family to Moab apparently did not spur anyone from Bethlehem to follow. Naomi found herself in a foreign land without husband, sons, or countrymen. She was in a

## Members Needing Our Prayers

Julie Patton, Deremia Osbourne, Ralph Fox, Jill Harrison, Joyce Bolton, Rick Small, Benny and Arlena Poynter, Gary Brown, Janett Brundige, Cindy Bradbury, Paul Atkisson

## Others Needing Prayer

Micah Genton, Doris Baker, Stuart Goodpasture, Jodi Harrison, Bob Brundige, Charlie Ford, Rose Curtis, Josh McKibben, Phyllis Harmon, Maurice Baker, Jeff Padgett, John Thompson, Georgia Patton, Glenda Miller, Patty Hill, Janice Parsons, Mark Nickles, Paul and Marrian Lyda

## To Our Guests

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difficult position in a world that could be very cruel to widows without sons to help support her.

Naomi was hurting and, much like Job, felt she was being attacked by God. (1:13, 19-22). Despite that, she never lost faith *in* God. I'm struck by the way verse 6 is stated. "...*she had heard in the fields of Moab that the Lord had visited his people and given them food.*" Rather than stating that the weather had changed, conditions had become more favorable, invaders had left the area, or any other factor contributing to famine, it is simply stated that "*the Lord had visited his people and given them food.*" Naomi continued to recognize the sovereignty of God. If any of the above factors had contributed to the famine, Naomi understood that God had power over them all. It was by his grace that food returned to the area. What a God-centered worldview!

Despite the absence of husband, sons, and countrymen, Naomi was not completely bereft of company. Next week we will begin to note the incredible love and loyalty that existed between Naomi and her daughters-in-law. One of them in particular would become an extraordinary blessing to her. Adam Litmer

<b>Elders</b>	<b>Deacons</b>	<b>Evangelist</b>
Troy Antle	Richard Brundige	Adam Litmer
David Collins	Adam Daniels	
Adam Litmer	Marcus Lake	
	Frank Patton	
	Jamie Powell	
	Pat Seabolt	
	James Weatherholt	

