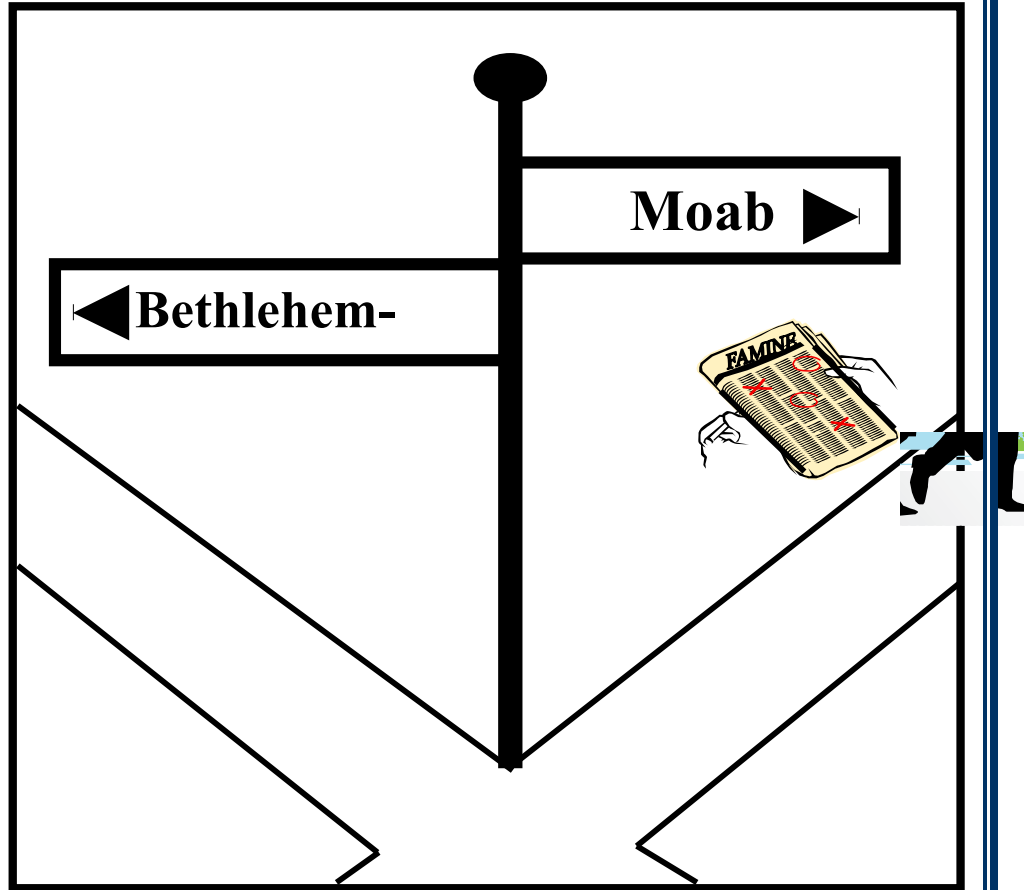


**MAKING GOOD CHOICES IN
THE MIDST OF LIFE'S
CRISES**



RUTH 1:1

Rev. Dr. Perry Simmons, Jr., B.A., M.A., D. Min.
224 West Kinney Street,
Newark, New Jersey
07103

**MAKING GOOD CHOICES IN THE MIDST OF
LIFE'S CRISES!**

RUTH 1:1

INTRODUCTION:

MOST CRISES IN LIFE ARE THE RESULT OF BAD DECISIONS OR IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR.

WE EITHER MAKE POOR OR WRONG JUDGMENTS OR ELSE FAIL TO DO WHAT WE SHOULD DO; CONSEQUENTLY, CRISIS STRIKE AND PROBLEMS ARE CREATED.

- 1. WHEN PEOPLE EAT TOO MUCH THEY CREATE A HEALTH CRISIS.**
- 2. A PERSON WHO DRIVES TOO FAST MAY CAUSE AN ACCIDENT.**
- 3. ONE WHO PLAYS WITH FIRE MIGHT GET BURNED.**

THE RESULTS OF BAD DECISIONS AND IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR COULD GO ON AND ON, BUT THE POINT IS WELL ILLUSTRATED AND EXPERIENCED BY US ALL.

WHEN WE MAKE BAD DECISIONS OR ACT IRRESPONSIBLY, WE OFTEN CREATE CRISES FOR OURSELVES OR FOR OTHERS.

ELIMELECH PROVES THIS POINT IN THE TEXT TODAY. WHEN CRISES CAME INTO THE LIFE OF HIS

FAMILY HE MADE A BAD CHOICE THAT LED TO BAD CONSEQUENCES.

BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER LET'S EXAMINE THE PERSON OF ELIMELECH.

HIS VERY NAME MEANS "MY GOD IS KING". THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS NAME HELPS US TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS BAD DECISION.

THIS ACCOUNT BEGINS IN THE CLOSING DAYS OF THE JUDGES, A 400 YEAR PERIOD OF GENERAL ANARCHY AND OPPRESSION WHEN THE ISRAELITES WERE NOT RULED BY KINGS, BUT BY PERIODIC DELIVERERS WHOM GOD RAISED UP WHEN THE NATION SOUGHT HIM AGAIN.

[VERSE ONE] SAYS, "*NOW IN THE DAYS WHEN THE JUDGES RULED...*" THE FACT THAT THE JUDGES RULED DEMONSTRATES THAT THERE WERE NO HUMAN KINGS IN ISRAEL. NOT UNTIL SAUL!

THEREFORE, ELIMELECH'S NAME SUGGESTS THAT THE RULING KING IN ISRAEL WAS GOD HIMSELF.

THE JUDGES RULED BECAUSE IT WAS SAID THAT THE PEOPLE DID WHAT WAS RIGHT IN THERE SIGHT.

AFTER THE LEADERSHIP OF JOSHUA, THE PEOPLE BEGAN TO FLIRT AND PRACTICE WITH IDOLATROUS WORSHIP AND THEREFORE FOUND THEMSELVES IN TROUBLE WITH GOD.

THESE WERE TURBULENT DAYS, VERY TROUBLED TIMES—SOME OF THE DARKEST DAYS OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY.

MORALLY, SOCIETY COLLAPSED, BECOMING A CESSPOOL OF MORAL CORRUPTION AND INJUSTICE.

AS A RESULT OF NATIONAL DISOBEDIENCE, ELIMELECH AND HIS FAMILY IS NOW AFFECTED BY A NATIONAL FAMINE INFLICTED BY GOD HIMSELF.

THEREFORE, WE WILL SEE IN THE TEXT THAT ELIMELECH DOES NOT LIVE UP TO HIS NAME AND MAKES A BAD DECISION.

LET'S LOOK AT THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING GOOD DECISIONS DURING LIFE'S CRISES.

EXPOSITION:

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE ALWAYS ONE BAD CHOICE FROM EXPERIENCING CRISES.

YOUR CHOICES TODAY WILL DETERMINE THE KIND OF LIFE YOU WILL LIVE TOMORROW.

WE KNOW WHAT CHOICES ELIMELECH MADE, BUT LET'S EXPLORE THE CHOICES HE SHOULD HAVE MADE.

I. WHEN CRISES COMES STAY IN THE WILL OF GOD [VERSE 1]

ONE OF THE BIGGEST MISTAKES I SEE PEOPLE MAKE IN LIFE IS THAT WHEN TROUBLE ENTERS INTO THEIR LIVES THEY BEGIN TO TAKE MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HAND.

IT IS AS IF THEY ARE SAYING THAT GOD IS NOT ABLE TO HANDLE THIS SITUATION FOR THEM SO THEY HANDLE IT THEMSELVES. BY DOING SO THEY

OFTEN END UP OUTSIDE OF GOD'S WILL FOR THEIR LIVES.

WHEN TROUBLE OR CRISES COMES DON'T RUN FROM GOD, RUN TO GOD.

SOMETIMES GOD WILL ALLOW YOU TO EXPERIENCE A SEASON OF CRISES, IN ORDER TO DRAW YOU CLOSER TO HIM.

ELIMELECH, WHOSE NAME MEANS "MY GOD IS KING", DID JUST THE OPPOSITE. HE LEFT GOD RATHER THAN RUNNING TO GOD.

THE TEXT SAYS THAT HE LEFT THE CITY IN SEARCH OF FOOD FOR HIM AND HIS FAMILY BECAUSE THERE WAS A FAMINE IN THE LAND.

FROM THE SURFACE THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A BAD CHOICE AT ALL, BUT IT WAS.

WHY! THE PLACE HE LEFT WAS THE PLACE OF BLESSINGS. HE LEFT THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM-JUDAH.

THE NAME BETHLEHEM IS TRANSLATED AS THE "HOUSE OF BREAD". THE NAME JUDAH IS TRANSLATED AS "PRAISE".

PUT IT ALL TOGETHER AND ELIMELECH LEFT THE "HOUSE OF BREAD AND PRAISE". HE LEFT GOD'S TRUE PROVISION FOR FALSE PROVISION.

THEY LEAVE THE HOUSE OF BREAD AND THE HOUSE OF PRAISE AND THEY GO OVER TO EAT OUT OF A GARBAGE CAN.

MANY OF US MAKE THIS SAME MISTAKE. WHEN THINGS ARE NOT GOING OUR WAY, WE LEAVE

GOD'S WILL AND SEEK OUT THINGS THAT ARE ULTIMATELY DAMAGING TO US.

II. WHEN CRISIS COMES DON'T PUT YOUR TRUST IN MOAB [VERSE 1]

MOAB IS PUTTING YOUR TRUST IN THINGS THAT DO NOT LINE UP WITH THE WILL OF GOD FOR YOUR LIFE.

IF YOU ARE ABOUT TO MAKE A DECISION THAT DOES NOT LOOK LIKE GOD, THEN DON'T DO IT!

FALSE HOPE COMES WHEN WE TRY TO MAKE GOD FIT INTO OUR PLANS RATHER THAN WE FIT INTO GOD'S PLAN.

JESUS TELLS A STORY OF THE PRODIGAL SON WHO LEAVES A STABLE ENVIRONMENT IN SEARCH OF SOMETHING BETTER. IN HIS SEARCH HE FOUND SOMETHING HE WAS NOT LOOKING FOR. THE PIG PEN!

WHENEVER YOU PUT YOUR TRUST IN THINGS THAT DO NOT LOOK LIKE GOD THEN IT IS CERTAIN THAT THE PIG PEN WILL FIND YOU.

ELIMELECH'S CRISES PERSUADED HIM TO BELIEVE THAT HE WAS BETTER OFF IN MOAB THAN IN BETHLEHEM-JUDAH.

MOAB WAS A PART OF THE WILDERNESS REGION THAT MOSES LED THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL THROUGH IN SEARCH OF THE PROMISED LAND.

NOW WE SEE ELIMELECH LEAVING THE LAND OF PROMISE HEADING BACK INTO THE WILDERNESS FROM WHICH GOD BROUGHT THEM OUT.

SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS AGAINST US ARE DESIGNED TO GET US TO QUESTION GOD AND HIS PLANS AND GET US TO NAVIGATE OUR OWN LIVES.

THESE WERE CLEARLY STEPS IN THE WRONG DIRECTION. WHENEVER WE DISTRUST GOD WE ALWAYS END UP HEADING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION.

WE ARE NO LONGER ABLE TO NEITHER SEE CLEARLY NOR THINK CLEARLY. AS A RESULT OF BLURRY VISION AND DISTORTED THINKING WE DISCOVER THAT WE HAVE BECOME MISPLACED AND PERPLEXED.

WHAT ELIMELECH HAD IN BETHLEHEM-JUDAH WAS REAL AND WHAT HE FOUND IN MOAB WAS FALSE.

WHEN TIMES GET TOUGH, YOU ARE BETTER OFF STAYING WITH GOD THAN TO SEEK AFTER OTHER REMEDIES.

THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE GOD COULD TAKE CARE OF THEM IN THE HOUSE OF BREAD AND OF PRAISE, SO THEY RAN OFF TO THE LAND OF MOAB.

YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT NO MATTER WHAT THE SITUATION IS OR WHERE IT TAKES PLACE THAT GOD IS ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU. [ISAIAH 40:29-31] SAYS:

[29] "HE GIVES POWER TO THE WEAK, AND TO THOSE WHO HAVE NO MIGHT HE INCREASES STRENGTH.

[30] EVEN THE YOUTHS SHALL FAINT AND BE WEARY, AND THE YOUNG MEN SHALL UTTERLY FALL,

[31] BUT THEY THAT WAIT ON THE LORD SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH; THEY SHALL MOUNT UP WITH WINGS LIKE EAGLES, THEY SHALL RUN AND NOT BE WEARY, THEY SHALL WALK AND NOT FAINT."

**III. WHEN CRISIS COMES, REMEMBER THAT
GOD IS NOT LIMITED IN OUR BAD CHOICES
[VERSE 1]**

GOD'S ABILITY IS NOT LIMITED WHEN WE MAKE POOR CHOICES. AS A MATTER OF FACT GOD'S ABILITY BECOMES MORE EVIDENT BECAUSE HE IS THE ONE WHO HAS TO CLEAN UP OUR MESSSES.

OUR BAD CHOICES DO NOT HINDER GOD, THEY HINDER US. IN THE END GOD'S PLAN WILL BE COMPLETED WITH OR WITHOUT US.

THE TEXT SHOWS US THAT EVEN THOUGH ELIMELECH MADE THE WRONG CHOICE HE DID HAVE TIME LIMIT ON HOW LONG HE WOULD REMAIN IN MOAB.

THE LATTER PART OF VERSE ONE SAYS THAT HE WENT ON A SOJOURN. THIS MEANS THAT HIS INTENTION WAS NOT TO STAY THERE BUT TO RETURN BACK TO BETHLEHEM-JUDAH.

THE CONCERN HERE IS THAT WHEN WE DEVIATE FROM GOD'S PLAN WE CAN EXPERIENCE RESTORATION BUT NOT ALWAYS ACCORDING TO OUR PLAN.

WHAT AM I TALKING ABOUT? I AM SURE THAT ELIMELECH HAD EVERY INTENTION TO RETURN BUT DEATH HINDERED HIS PLANS.

WE MUST BE CAREFUL THAT WHEN WE DISOBEY GOD, WE MIGHT HAVE TO ENDURE SOME UNCOMFORTABLE CONSEQUENCES IN OUR RESTORATION.

CONCLUSION:

ELIMELECH TEACHES US THAT WE NEED TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS IN THE MIDST OF LIFE'S CRISES.

THAT WE NEED TO WAIT ON GOD RATHER THAN TAKE MATTERS INTO OUR OWN HANDS.

- A. ***“THEY THAT WAIT ON THE LORD” WILL GET A BLESSING***
1. ***“SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH”.***
 - a. **TO RENEW IS TO REVIVE.**
 - b. **YOU MAY RUN OUT OF ENERGY AND GOD PROMISES TO REVIVE YOU.**
 - c. **BUT REMEMBER THAT A SETBACK IS A SETUP FOR YOUR COMEBACK.**
 2. ***“YOU SHALL MOUNT UP WITH WINGS AS EAGLES”.***
 - a. **AN EAGLE IS ONE THAT DOESN'T STRUGGLE WHILE FLYING, BUT GLIDES TO HIS DESTINATION.**
 - b. **YOU TOO CAN GLIDE WHEN YOU KEEP YOUR FOCUS ON HIS BLESSING.**
 3. ***“YOU SHALL RUN AND NOT GET WEARY, YOU SHALL WALK AND NOT FAINT”.***
 - a. **YOU CAN KNOW THAT AS YOU MOVE FORWARD IN LIFE, THROUGH THE TRIALS AND THE TESTS THAT WILL COME YOUR WAY, GOD PROMISES TO GIVE YOU THE ABILITY TO KEEP PRESSING FORWARD.**

b. IT IS BECAUSE OF HIS BLESSINGS.

B. SOME OF YOU MIGHT ASK, “HOW CAN WE KNOW THAT GOD’S POWER CAN BRING US THROUGH?”

1. LOOK AT THE RECORD;

a. ABRAHAM

b. MOSES

c. DAVID

d. ELIJAH

e. DANIEL

f. JEREMIAH

g. HEBREW BOYS

h. JESUS