

OUR FAITH IN GOD IN MOMENTS OF CRISIS

(Ruth 1)

Every crisis and trial in life is purposefully ordained by God to reveal the quality of our faith. Crisis serves as crucibles which test and expose the character of one's faith. Confronted with a series of severe adversities, one family in the Old Testament showcased three kinds of faith as a response to the spiritual challenge of their life's crisis.

1. _____ **leads to God's discipline.**
Elimelech, like any responsible husband and father, values the economic welfare of his family. Faced with the problem of famine, he chose to leave Bethlehem and relocated his household to Moab (Ruth 1:1-3). His decision reflects a tragic compromise in his faith. Elimelech compromised the spiritual welfare of his own family when he brought them to Moab which was a pagan and idolatrous nation. Compromising faith surrenders the priority of God's kingdom and righteousness in exchange of perceived convenience and temporary comfort (Matthew 6:33). This kind of faith leads to God's judgment and discipline (Ruth 1:3-5; Hebrews 12:11).
 2. _____ **blinds us from seeing God's goodness.**
Naomi was grievously battered by the onslaught of one tragedy after another: the famine in Bethlehem, the death of her husband in Moab followed by the demise of her two other sons ten years later (Ruth 1:3-5). In all these losses, Naomi kept her faith in the Almighty God whom she recognized as the Sovereign One behind all her afflictions (Ruth 1:14,21). What Naomi failed to see, however, was the goodness of God (Psalm 100:5; Isa. 63:7). Bitter faith, though it acknowledges the sovereign hand of God, blinds our minds from recognizing the good, caring, kind and loving heart of the Lord. This kind of faith clouds our vision of God's generous blessings in our lives (Heb. 12:6,10; Psalm 103:1-5).
 3. _____ **clings to God's faithfulness.**
Ruth, in spite of the strong insistence of Naomi for her to stay in Moab, chose to cleave with her and cling to her newly found faith in the God of Israel (Ruth 1:11-13; 14-17). All that Naomi has said about her hopelessness, poverty and sorrow didn't weaken Ruth's resolve to follow God. Ruth was giving up all of those things for the most important thing of all: a relationship to the true and living God (Deut. 10:20; 13:4). Steadfast faith clings to God no matter how severe the crisis is. Such kind of faith is never shaken by the threat of tragedies. This faith trusts in God's faithful provision for today's needs and sufficient strength for tomorrow's crisis. This faith cherishes one's covenant relationship with the sovereign and good God who is forever faithful in rewarding and blessing His loyal children (Ruth 1:22; Deut. 7:9; Psalm 33:18-21; Heb.10:23; Lam. 3:19-26).
-

