

## Signs of hope for the nations

### Ruth chapter 1:22

#### 1. Promise of new beginnings vs 22

In those days, Israel had no king, everyone did what was right in their own eyes. No or poor leadership have devastating consequences.

Elimek (God is king), Naomi (pleasantness) and their two children Mahlon (Sickly) and Kilion (to become weak and die) left Bethlehem because of famine to live in Moab, a foreign country.

Do not call me Naomi but Mara! To give up on your name, she must have felt low. One's name is so closely tied to your identity and personhood.

#### Vs 22.

However, she arrives there at the beginning of harvest. There is hope! Signs of restoration and newness. God has not forgotten us! For many around the world hopefully, there are signs of new beginnings.

The amazing growth of the church Brian Stiller

#### **Growth Drivers**

The age of the Spirit

The power of Bible translation

Revolution of the indigenous

Re-engaging the public square

The power of the whole Gospel

#### 2. Providence 2:3

Ruth goes to collect grain. **As it turned out**, the field belongs to Boaz.

God is in control of the affairs of nations. When we read Scripture, we see His hand throughout. We see his hand in history. He is in control.

We need to look for the hand of God, even in these dark times. There are so many opportunities.

- A. The impact of media. S
- B. The church involved in community transformation, in SA much more than the government
- C. The church speaking out against injustices

Where have you seen the hand of God?

### **3. Positive power dynamics 3:1-10**

Boaz is a rich, powerful landowner. Ruth is female and she is a foreigner. How do we handle these power dynamics in our own society, rich vs poor, nationals vs foreigners, male and female, young and old. The lid is being lifted on injustice and oppression around the world. The Church has the amazing opportunity to bring Good News!

I hope we in the church will be equally outraged that despite the efforts over so many years, there are still so many who have yet to hear the name of Jesus for the first time.

### **4. Potential Realized: the child! 4:13-16**

It is Naomi' child! There's something redemptive here! Jesus is **the** hope for the nations but this hope is lived out through His church. He blesses us so that we may be a blessing to the nations. Ps 67:1,2 is very clear!

May God be gracious to us and bless us; and make his face shine upon us; So that your ways may be known on earth; your salvation among **ALL** nations.