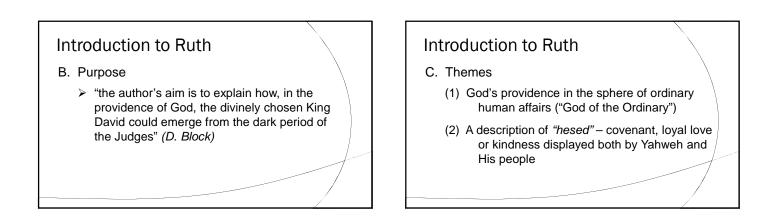
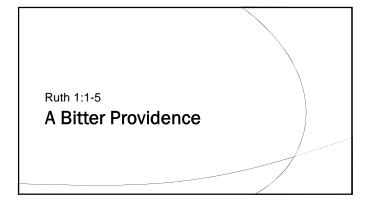


Introduction to Ruth

A. Historical Context

- it takes place during the spiritually dark period of the Judges remarkable!
- it provides an intended, hopeful contrast with the end of Judges

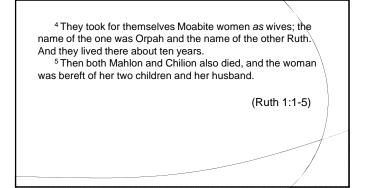




Now it came about in the days when the judges governed, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the land of Moab with his wife and his two sons.

² The name of the man *was* Elimelech, and the name of his wife, Naomi; and the names of his two sons *were* Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. Now they entered the land of Moab and remained there.

 $^{3}\,\text{Then}$ Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left with her two sons.



A Bitter Providence

- 1. An ominous beginning
 - "famine in the land" sign of God's judgment
 - "sojourn in the land of Moab" the response of unbelief (?)

A Bitter Providence

- 1. An ominous beginning
 - reversal of names:
 - Bethlehem "house of bread"
 - Elimelech "my God is King"
 - Naomi "pleasant one"

A Bitter Providence

- 2. A hopeless condition
 - As an aged widow Naomi had...
 - no provision or protection
 - no prospect of remarriage
 - no children or grandchildren
 - no survival of the family line/inheritance

A Bitter Providence

3. A recognition of God's providence

- *right view* she knew that ultimately Yahweh was the cause of her bitter circumstances
- *limited view* she could not see or begin to imagine the good that Yahweh was beginning to work in her circumstances

A Bitter Providence

Lesson:

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But trust Him for His grace; Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face.