

A Mother's Influence

Mother's Day | May 13, 2018

Ruth 1:1-2 In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. The man's name was Elimelek, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.

Judges 21:25 In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.

I. **The stories of the Bible should be read through a lens of human emotion.**

Ruth 1:3-5 Now Elimelek, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

Ecclesiastes 5:15 Everyone comes naked from their mother's womb, and as everyone comes, so they depart. They take nothing from their toil that they can carry in their hands.

A. Life comes with loss.

Psalm 68:5 A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.

B. God defends those in need.

Psalm 10:14 But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted; you consider their grief and take it in hand. The victims commit themselves to you; you are the helper of the fatherless.

II. **The Book of Ruth is a story of grief redeemed.**

Ruth 1:6-7 When Naomi heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

A. Times of pressure will either bring people together or tear them apart.

Ruth 1:8-9 Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the Lord show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me. May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband." Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud

1. To love is to be selfless.

Romans 12:10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Ruth 1:10 and said to her, "We will go back with you to your people."

2. Little actions influence big decisions.

Ruth 1:11-13 But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons—would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord's hand has turned against me!"

Deuteronomy 25:5-6 If brothers are living together and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother shall take her and marry her and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her. The first son she bears shall carry on the name of the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel.

Ruth 1:14 At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

Ruth 1:15 "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."

Ruth 1:16-18 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me." When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

B. Individuals may often know God through His people before they know Him for themselves.

- Covenant is expressed by commitment.

C. The Book of Ruth reminds us that God is able to redeem what has been lost.

1. Who you are shows others who God is.
2. Who you are influences who others will become.