



MOTHER'S DAY

UNEXPECTED TURNS OF HOPE

Book of Ruth
May 11, 2025
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MESSAGE NOTES

Finding direction when life takes unexpected turns:

In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. 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. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband. — Ruth 1:1 – 5 (ESV)

- **Go to the place of blessing, even at great cost (Ruth 1:6 – 8, 14)**
- **Bless the people around you as you can (Ruth 1:8 – 9, 19 – 22)**

But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go, return each of you to her mother’s house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!” ... — Ruth 1:8 – 9 (ESV)

- **Be honest about your situation (Ruth 2:1 – 3, 8 – 13, 19 – 20)**

She said to them, “Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the Lord has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?” — Ruth 1:20 – 21 (ESV)

Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good. — 1 Peter 4:19 (ESV)

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest. — Ruth 1:22 (ESV)

- **Turn toward hope and trust God to bless (Ruth 3:6 – 8)**

And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!” ... — Ruth 2:20 (ESV)



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Discussion Starter: What is one of your dreams or hopes for the future?
- What are some of the key lessons we can take away from the story of Naomi, Boaz, and Ruth?
- Naomi's journey of faith is one where shattered dreams are transformed into different, renewed dreams. How does God sometimes reshape our dreams as we grow in faith?
- When life takes an unexpected turn, what does it mean to *"go to a place of blessing, even at great cost"*? How did Naomi do this, and why?
- *"Returning"* and *"repenting"* are very similar in the Hebrew of the Old Testament. What are the cost and the blessing of repentance in our relationship with Christ? How are returning and repenting similar in our relationship with God?
- What does it mean to *"bless others as you can"* in the face of unexpected life changes? Share an example of someone who lived this out in your life.
- Why is being honest and real before God such a powerful part of our journey toward healing, hope, and strength when life is difficult or uncertain?
- Read Matthew 1:5 – 6. Naomi and Ruth returned to Bethlehem, which ultimately became the birthplace of Jesus centuries later. Boaz becomes a *"kinsman-redeemer"* (a close relative with the responsibility to rescue, redeem, or protect a family member) to Ruth, even though he was actually related to Naomi. Why is it significant that Boaz became the kinsman-redeemer to Ruth, a Moabite woman? How does the story of Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi point us to Christ as our ultimate Redeemer?
- What does it mean to turn toward hope through Christ? Where in your life are you needing God's hope? Share as a group and pray for one another.