

Regrets or Redemption

All of us can look back through our life and wish we had done things differently.

Our choices today are the building blocks of our future.

When you are young you think O Lord help me survive these two and three year-olds; then one day you wake up and they are teenagers and you wish they were two again.

Then they move out and have families of their own. They may move out of the house but they never move out of our heart.

Today I want to look at three women out of the book of **Ruth**:

- Naomi
- Ruth
- Orpah.

All three of these women made present choices that directed their future. As mothers, women, and men we all can learn from their lives.

Ruth 1:1

- Famine came to Judah.
- Elimelech and his wife Naomi and their two sons left their home in Bethlehem (Hebrew meaning "house of bread ") to go to the pagan land to find bread.

The enemy always tries to entice us to leave God's covering and go to his camp for provision.

The grass may look greener but greener is not always God.

Psalms 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord:

This text gives no evidence that God directed Elimelech to leave Bethlehem.

Ruth 1:3 Elimelech dies. Leaves Naomi to be taken care of by sons.

Ruth 1:4 The sons took Moabite women as wives, Orpah and Ruth.

Ruth 1:5 Both sons die. No husband, no sons, no support and she is in a pagan land.

Ruth 1:6 Naomi hears that there is bread in Judah. Naomi realizes there is no provision in the enemy's camp so she goes back to Bethlehem (house of bread).

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Ruth 1:8-14 Tells her daughters to return to their people.

Ruth 1:14 Orpah goes back to her people and their gods.

Ruth 1:16-18 Ruth decides to go with Naomi and that her God would be her God.

Ruth 1:19 Ruth and Naomi return to Bethlehem.

Ruth 1:20 -21 Destitute, broken, and in poverty

Three broken women, three choices.

When the worst crisis of life happens, where will you turn?

1. Will you go back to your old life even though you have heard the truth?
 - This is what Orpah did. She wasn't a bad woman and she loved Naomi. Orpah had wavering faith that chose to return to her gods.
 - We never hear about her in scripture after that.

There is no substance, no person, no place, only Jesus can satisfy. In the enemy camp, there are only temporary fixes of pleasure but no peace and the end is the ways of death.

1. Will you stand still and continue to serve God even when you don't understand? This is what Naomi did when she returned to her homeland.
 - She went back to the house of bread. At first, she blames God and says that “He has dealt bitterly with me and afflicted me.”
 - The devil is always putting the blame on God when bad things happen.
 - Naomi and her husband took themselves out of God’s provision. Sometimes when we are out of the will of God, we tend to blame God for the way our lives turn out.
 - The Lord is merciful as long as we turn back -He can turn the mess into a message.
 - Naomi returns and God shows her his mighty hand of provision.

We all have the choice to let life's circumstances make us bitter or better. I have seen people that wouldn't let go of their hurt & bitterness destroyed them and their families. This is enemy's plan.

2. Will you believe God, obey Him, and let Him be your provision when everything has fallen apart in your life?
 - This is what Ruth did and she met her kinsmen redeemer.
 - Naomi's Godly inner strength when her husband and sons died; showed Ruth's God was real in the midst of adversity.

Ruth 2:1-19

Ruth gleaned barley after the reapers and comes to the field of Boaz. A wealthy, God-fearing man that was a kinsman of Naomi. He tells her to glean only in his field and he will provide for her and protect her.

Ruth 2:20 Naomi blesses God because He hasn't forsaken them and has provided them a kinsman.

Ruth 3:1-18 Naomi instructs Ruth to go to the threshing floor. She uncovers his feet as Naomi has instructed her. She has him to take her under his wing because he is a close relative. He calls her blessed.

Ruth 4:1-17 Boaz legally redeems Ruth and becomes his wife. She bears a son and they called him Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David. The women said to Naomi, you are blessed because God gave a daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better than seven sons.

Decisions to follow God's ways are always honored and blessed by God.

Some of us hear these Scriptures and think wow I wish my life would turn happy like theirs. We never know what we will face in life but the choices we make will make your future. But God can change our regrets to redemption.

1 Sam. 2:30 "I will honor people who honor Me..."

Elimelech, Naomi, and their sons left their covenant land, which was their place of protection and provision when the famine hit.

They left to go to a pagan land for provision and protection.

Elimelech dies.

Naomi becomes a broken widow that should have been cared for by her sons that married women of Moab.

Both sons die. (Their self-protection failed)

Naomi is a bitter broken widow and daughter-in-law returns to Judah her homeland in the barley season.

Even though Naomi's family had made bad choices to leave, Naomi knew her hope was in the living God so she returned to her covenant land and God.

(If you have made bad decisions and you are broken, repent and return to God & the place of your help)

Ruth a young widow chooses to follow Naomi and the living God.

She cares for her and obeys her instruction.

She meets her kinsman redeemer Boaz.

Boaz redeems Ruth, she becomes his wife, and they care for Naomi.

Regret to Redemption

1. Repent of following your own way.

- 1John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
(Naomi returned to God)

2. Be obedient and teachable.

- Ruth obeyed Naomi and Boaz and gleaned only in Boaz's field.
- 1 John 1:6 “If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.”

3. Let Jesus heal and redeem the pain of the past.

- Boaz redeemed Ruth and Naomi from the past and gave them new life.
- Isaiah 53:5 “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him: and by His stripes we are healed.”
- There is nothing in your life that is unredeemable.

4. Wait on the Lord.

- Naomi and Ruth waited for Boaz to redeem them.
- Psalms 27:14 “Wait on the Lord: be of good courage; and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say on the Lord.”

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