



L3L30: Ruth the Moabitess

Ruth 1

The book of Ruth is a story of friendship, commitment, adversity, triumph and true love. The setting is in the time of the judges. Israel had turned her back on God, so He brought a famine upon the land to punish them for their rebellion. A man named Elimelech, along with his wife Naomi and sons Mahlon and Chilion, left their home in Bethlehem, and traveled to neighboring Moab in hopes of escaping the famine. But hard times followed them. First, Elimelech died, leaving Naomi a widow. Then after ten years of marriage, Naomi's sons Mahlon and Chilion died, leaving both of their young wives without a husband. All three women face a hopeless situation, as widows without the protection of a husband or father. One of Naomi's daughter-in-laws, Ruth, rises to the occasion, and gives us an example of love and service that continues to inspire us today.

Discuss:

- The Moabites were descendants of Lot, Abraham's nephew. Also, the Moabites opposed the children of Israel when they left Egypt, and there was a history of animosity between the two peoples (Deuteronomy 23:3–6).
- During the time of Ruth, women depended on their husbands or sons to protect them. Ruth knew that Naomi had neither so she volunteered to take on that role.
- Ruth showed great respect, love, and commitment to her mother-in-law. She also courageously made a huge sacrifice to leave everything familiar to her to go to a place where she might not be accepted because she was a Moabitess. What do you think it was like for Ruth to make that decision?



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Memorization Challenge:

Ruth 1:16

But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God."