

Love Is Kind (1)

Scripture Reading — Ruth 1

Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her. — Ruth 1:14

At the beginning of this story, Naomi is worse off than her two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth. They are young and can likely marry again and have children of their own. But Naomi is not hopeful about her future. She feels bitter and empty. And she holds God responsible for the deaths that have robbed her of so much.

Where is God in Naomi's life? Let's look at Ruth. She doesn't need Naomi to get on with her life, but she acts kindly toward her mother-in-law by tenaciously clinging to her in love. Ruth prefigures "the mind of Christ"!

Back in Bethlehem, God provides a distant relative of Naomi's to marry Ruth and welcome Naomi back into the family. Eventually they have a son, and they name him Obed. "He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age," say the local women to Naomi (Ruth 4:15). According to the customs of that time, Obed would be responsible for providing for his grandmother Naomi and keeping her family name alive.

And there's more. Obed became the father of Jesse, who became the father of the great King David of Israel. And much later, through this same family line, God gave another Son-Jesus Christ—the hope and fulfillment of the whole world! When love moves us to be kind, God can do "immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20).

Prayer

Father, as you worked through Ruth's kindness to renew Naomi's hope, work through our acts of kindness to renew the faith, hope, and love of others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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