

Even though these were Moabitess women whom we could reckon are without the solid knowledge of the God of Israel, Naomi testified of them: "...the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me." Ruth 1:8.

In other words, Ruth and her sister Orpah dealt kindly with their husbands and their mother-in-law. She testified herself that they dealt kindly with her.

One of the attributes of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 is recorded thus: "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness." Proverbs 31:26 KJV

The question I will ask every daughter in law or son-in-law reading this post today is whether your mother-in-law can give this kind of testimony about you. Are you kind towards your spouse and their parents? Is your tongue ruled by the law of kindness or you lash it out at everyone around you?

The model daughter-in-law is that daughter-in-law who like Ruth adopts her mother-in-law as her own mother and chooses to cleave to her and love her with all her heart. Certainly, Naomi herself was a great example but that's not what was solely responsible for the kind of cleaving we found in Ruth. It was a decision. Naomi would still have had her weaknesses. Orpah was dealing with the same mother-in-law but didn't cleave to her like Ruth.

Please don't respond to this message by telling us how bad your mother-in-law is. How did she raise a loving man like your husband if she is that bad? Can you deal with your own self also? Are you really yourself doing right? Are you accommodating? Are you persevering? Are you humble enough to take corrections? When Naomi instructed Ruth on the strategy to win Boaz's heart, do you know her response? "And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do." Ruth 3:5.

Can you imagine such level of submission? Why is it that your own mother-in-law can never correct you? No matter how much she brings the correction in love, you get offended. Do you think you're like Ruth? Ruth successfully adopted her mother-in-law as a discipler. That required total brokenness and submission. While I do not advocate that all mothers-in-law will

qualify to be a discipler to a wife, at least check your own heart and be sure you're humble and correctable.

What made it easy for Ruth to receive instruction and correction from Naomi was the fact she had adopted Naomi truly in her heart as her own mother. That's the key. Your mother corrects you and it is OK. It should be OK with this second mother also. You also had the freedom to respectfully disagree with your own biological mother when it is necessary without seeing her as an enemy. You should be able to respectfully disagree with your mother-in-law and return to friendship the minute after.

Parents-in-law must also not see it as a taboo that their daughter or son in-law freely disagreed with them. If he is truly a son or daughter in the house, he should have that freedom.

The fact is if my parents-in-law offend me, I will tell them plainly without hypocritical diplomacy. And if they think I am too free with them, I will explain why: "because I don't see you less than my biological parents and if I can freely disagree with my biological parents, I should be able to be that free with you." This is what we give us a truly close and beautiful relationship devoid of hypocrisy.

In closing, I was deeply touched when I came to Ruth 2:18. After Ruth was done gleaning barley for the day, "she took out and gave to Naomi what she had saved after she [had eaten and] was satisfied."

This was a daughter-in-law who didn't eat it all. After she was satisfied, she brought the rest to her mother-in-law. She isn't like some who will actively block any resource that attempts to flow to their parents-in-law and husband's family. Everything must flow to her and her people alone. A man can do this too by fighting his wife about sending money to her parents or siblings.

The ideal, if we are following the Ruth example is even that, the daughter-in-law herself should be actively committed to giving to her husband's parents and family while the man is

actively committed to giving to his wife's parents and family.

If, "your people shall be my people" is the principle we are following, we should love each other's family so much that we are always advocating for their interest. Let your partner even be wondering, "are they your parents or my parents? You're too devoted to their wellbeing." I receive this grace for myself in Jesus name.

In the end, the women of Bethlehem praised Ruth and called her a daughter who loved Naomi and better to her than seven sons. Ruth 4:15. May this be our testimony also. May we be such a great blessing to our in-laws that we will be to them more than seven sons.

Lord, please deal with our hearts. Make us love beings. Perfect us in love to the praise and glory of your name. Amen.

Your brother,
Peniela Eniayo, Akintujoye.

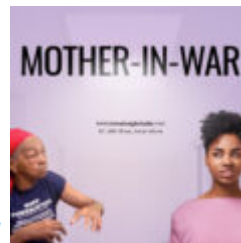
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