

A Mother's Light and Strife by Don Cothran.

As I laid upon a threshing floor and pondered Mother and Son I wondered what would be my fate if God had not begun.

For by his words as law to heart he writes upon our soul and binds to laws of love our feet, to tread where he would go!

By law and love a mother, joy and bliss, yea my delight. I followed her forsaking all... whatever be my plight...

By law and love another, a mother surely owed a life, for stranger, family, people... a day of terror, pain, and strife!

For by these loves a mother blessed, not by law or right. Lit a candle in the darkness so her flame could find its light.

Then that candle lit another, and another was entwined till God did light his candle... so that none should ere be blind.

Verse 1 breakdown:

"As I laid upon a threshing floor and pondered Mother and Son I wondered what would be my fate if God had not begun."

Although the title of the Poem itself provides the first set of clues for the overall meaning, this verse is clearly designed to reveal the Voice or Narrator of the story within the poem. It starts "As I laid" so first person language i.e. the person that is talking IS the Voice! Which is also the first clue! Define who is talking, define the Voice! The action sets the scene and some of the characters.

"Threshing floor". Many people know this story, and know that Ruth and Boaz are the main characters. Yes, there are other "threshing floor" mentions in the Bible (Gideon and the fleece for one), but this was so easy to obtain even without a bible. Go to Google and type these words... bible threshing floor. Just a few responses down the page you will see the Ruth and Boaz mention. So there were only two people on the threshing floor that night. A female... Ruth and a male Boaz. During the scene in the Bible, Boaz was sleeping and Ruth came in and laid at his feet. Only one was conscious to ponder anything in this bible scene and that was Ruth. She was trying to get Boaz the son of another famous bible mother that we hear about later to marry her.

The key to the first mother mentioned was to show the relationship of whose mother it was to be and the son she, Ruth was pondering, (the one she was with on the threshing floor). He is the son of another mother that God showed great favor due to her deeds, and through her deeds, and her proclamation of "your God is God in heaven and earth", she was blessed, and in turn is potentially blessing Ruth through her journey by Boaz. Ruth was a Moabite, who were idol worshippers. Until Elimelech took his wife and sons to escape a famine to Moab, surely the chances of Ruth finding her first husband Mahlon and the love of God was slim. God started a chain of events through which the whole world would be blessed. That points to the key part of the poem which reads... "if God had not Begun" which is the cornerstone of verse 1.

Clues... #1 "As I laid" first person language, #2 "Threshing Floor" #3 "Mother and Son", #4 "Fate If God had not begun" (her predicament and the reveal of what God was beginning for the latter part of poem). Total 4

Verse 2 Breakdown

"For by his words as law to heart he writes upon our soul and binds to laws of love our feet to tread where he would go!"

This is one of my favorite verses, if for no other reason than the sheer poetry that accompanies a walk with God. Ruth had no right, by heritage or law, to be granted such favor but by the law of God's love alone who sees the heart of anyone that has light. This is shown in the Old and New Testament. They become God's people by their love. He first made a covenant with a people, but they didn't understand... It was conditional. They had to hold up their end. That's why so many were destroyed through the years. Even in the Old Testament God is suggesting it is more than His covenant! They shall only be his people when they accept it on their mind and heart and turn to Him!

Jeremiah 31:33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put MY law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be MY People." Said again in Hebrews 8:10 and 10:16. Ruth became one of God's people! God wrote on her heart through love. A law says where you can't go. It doesn't necessarily show us where we should go. We may remember the law but we follow and seek after the heart of God. Blessed are we if he binds our feet to tread the path of love he has set for us and written on our very heart and soul.

Clues: #1 "as law to heart he writes upon our soul". Echoing the prophecy in the verses shown in Jeremiah. #2 "and binds to laws of love our feet.. " through love, God guides us so that we should follow his path. We will see that in verse 3 and how important it is. Total 2

Verse 3 breakdown:

"By law and love a mother, joy and bliss, yea my delight. I followed her forsaking all... whatever be my plight..."

This is the first verse that starts to identify one of the mothers and should have been the simplest to find. "By law and Love, a Mother". Just stopping there. The poetic phrasing doesn't hide hard facts in this clue. In fact you will notice two distinctly different phrasings around the words "mother" which is used 4 times in the poem. In this one it's saying by law a Mother! "Mother-in-law" to the person who is speaking... loved by the speaker.... She's a mother-in law of the Voice, Ruth. There are other words that describe this mother in law by name... "joy", "bliss", "my delight". Go to Google. Type in the following words: bible hebrew joy and bliss yea my delight. Then look down the page... it will yield... Naomi definition: the lovable; my delight, the wife of Elimelech, and mother of Mahlon and Chilion, and mother-in-law of (Ruth 1: 2 ... The name may mean "my joy," "my bliss," : (with the Internet we are blessed by having such an awesome tool at our fingertips for resource if used with a thorough understanding of God through the Bible. Place it with an online bible like the Word of Promise Audio Bible, and it is amazing what you can find and how fast.) so back to the Poem, it spells out that this mother is Naomi and the next part... "follow whatever be my plight"... it sets up one of the most famous verses of love and faith in the Bible.

Ruth 1:16-17 - 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. Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me." What an unbound testimony that God chose the right people through whom the greatest love would eventually be brought into the world. Not God's people through right, or law, but by their love displayed!

Clues: #1 "by law and love a mother" (mother in law whom she loved). #2 "joy" #3 "bliss" And #4 "my delight". All of those are definitions of what the name "Naomi" means #5 "I followed her forsaking all" (the where you go I will go quote). Total 5

Verse 4 breakdown.

"By law and love another, a mother surely owed a life, for stranger, family, people... a day of terror, pain, and strife!"

This has the most detail because some scholars even suggest that Jericho fell centuries prior to Joshua. It's the whole "are you going to believe God or man argument. I know which I believe, and here is the Biblical proof! To the poem... here are the characteristics of a mother we haven't identified yet. It could be Boaz mother (mother and son of verse 1) or another, but there is a story that defines it. It also suggests a relationship. "By law and love another mother". So mother in law again to the Voice, Ruth. Marrying Boaz would put Ruth in the lineage of Boaz mother. We find out in Matthew 1:5 that Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David. This puts Ruth with two mother-in-laws through her marriage first to Mahlon and then to Boaz. But does it fit with the story of Rahab the harlot and make my poem complete?

Joshua 2:1 Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.... Ok so this was right after Moses had died and 40 years since Joshua first spied out the land himself. Joshua was in his 80s so this time he didn't go as a spy, but sent his spies who encounter a harlot that could be between probably 20 and far end 30 years of age. So that dates Rahab's birth needing to be around the latter years of Moses life, with time to grow up and become a harlot before the taking of Jericho.

For the right timing for this to happen, It would be the father and grandfather of Salmon that would need to be contemporary with the timeline when Moses & Aaron were doing the things they did in Numbers, which was setting up armies, captains, and camps right after the Exodus. The Exodus and period before Jericho fell was about 42 years. The timeline that would produce Boaz as the son of Rahab the harlot and Salmon son of Nahshon is tied up in the age of both. It is Nahshon, son of Amminidab, that is crucial to place his young son (to be) Salmon, in the general age of a young harlot in the time period that Jericho is falling. So we can all agree that Joshua (from Jacobs son Joseph), and Moses (from Jacobs son Levi), are contemporaries about 40 years apart. We need proof that Salmon, husband to be of Rahab, son of Nahshon, son of Amminidab whose lineage goes through Jacob's son Judah could have been present at the time prior to the battle of Jericho and during the time of Moses and Joshua that would allow him to fall in love with a young woman and father a child named Boaz.

Here it is... in Numbers 2:1-4 And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: "Everyone of the children of Israel shall camp by his own standard, beside the emblems of his father's house; they shall camp some distance from the tabernacle of meeting. On the east side, toward the rising of the sun, those of the standard of the forces with Judah shall camp according to their armies; and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be the leader of the children of Judah." And his army was numbered at seventy-four thousand six hundred. So how hard of a stretch would it be to think that in the 40 plus years of wandering around that he might have fathered Salmon who married someone by the name of Rahab that would be close to his age. Indeed Salmon must have been born during the wandering in the wilderness that make up the 40 years between the first spying of the land by Joshua and the fall of Jericho. That would place Rahab and Salmon most likely no more than a few years apart. How fortuitous that God provided some spectacular details on a needed Rahab for the occasion where she would be referenced in both Old and New testaments. God does NOT do things without purpose!

Now back to the Poem. Here is the final clue that this is Rahab in the poem. "a mother surely owed a life, for stranger, family, people... a day of terror, pain, and strife! "

Now read about the encounter. This is Rahab talking in Joshua 2:9-14 and she said to the men: "I know that the Lord has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the Lord, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the Lord has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you."

That definitively binds Rahab the harlot to the second Mother-in-law of the poem and biblically aligns that to what she did.. She was indeed owed the life of her family and brought them through a day of terror, while recognizing God as the one and only True God. I can imagine that would still be in Boaz mind as many years later he had the opportunity to show compassion to another young woman from a foreign land, proclaiming love to her mother-in-law and to God till death. Is there anyone that God could possibly want more in the lineage of pure love for his son?

Clues. #1 "by law and love another mother" - mother in law of Ruth. #2 "owed a life"... promised by the spies for her and her family. #3 "a day of terror pain and strife". The fall of Jericho. The clues through this verse tie this mother-in law to be the mother of the son in verse one where Ruth is pondering "mother and son"! Note that there was no "by law and love" attached to the first mother mentioned in verse #1 because it was mother and child by birth. The poem has one mother mentioned as still yet unaccounted for. This is the topic of verse 5. Total 3.

Mother's Light and Strife Proof Revision 1 (name corrected)

I created this chart first by compiling lineages. I knew there were common references that would allow multiple points of convergence within scripture. It helps to first throw out the nonsense of man and believe God is in control and knows the truth to begin with and ensured it was in His book to teach the world.

See the chart below to understand how Rahab (only Identified by her situation In the fall of Jericho) aligns in the timeline with Salmon. We only need to align Salmon with the fall to do this. We start with the common frame of reference, the tree through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You can see the various stories in just looking at the tree. There were twelve tribes but the Joseph line to Joshua son of Nun came through Ephraim rather than Manesseh. The line through Joseph and Judah had some drama and youngish departures through deaths.

Notice the incredible longevity through Levi the priesthood though. Moses died younger than most and his own brother Aaron lived to 123.

Judah had two sons promised to Tamar. God took Er early because he was evil in God's sight. Then Judah promised Selah to Tamar if she would wait till he grew up but God took him as well. That set up the whole deception by Tamar where she slept with Judah and instead of him being a grandfather to Tamar's child he was the father. He was father to Perez also known as Pharaz. There were lots of "soap opera" stories with "the chosen people"... this drama further proves the final premise that I reveal in the end.

Corrected.			Jacob	147 Years				
			Judah	129 Years	Joseph	110 Years	Levi	137 Years
	ER	Selah	Judah	Tamar	Ephraim			
God Kills Er and Sela, Tamar lies With Judah Has Perez			Pharaz / Perez	119 Years	Resheph		Kohath	133 Years
					Tela			
			Hezron		Tahan		Amran	137 Years
			Ram		LaaDan			
							Moses	120 Years
			Amminadab		Ammihud		In his late 30's Moses fled Egypt and was in Voluntary Exile in Midian for 40 Years	
					Elishama		Moses was in late 70's when the Exodus began	
This is what aligns the timeframes. Numbers is about God directing Moses and Aaron setting up the people and leaders. In Numbers 2:3 Moses is giving Nashon The son of Amminadab orders on camping			Nashon	This takes place over a short period of time	Numbers 2:18 Elishama Son Of Ammihud was placed as leader of Ephraim. His Son was NUN		Moses	2 years out of Egypt, Time of the organization of the Camps in Numbers
This means that Joshua lines up with an Older Moses, who lines up with Nahshon the father of Salmon and makes the timing right for Salmon to be born and be a young man when Jericho falls and a young Harlot is saving her whole family by her deeds!					Nun's Son was the "Joshua" son Of Nun referenced		Joshua was Moses Assistant as a young man and 40 when he spied the land for Moses who was 80. God is Angry and makes them wait for another 40 Years	
That means His Son that Married RAHAB, Salmon... lines up perfectly	Salmon	Rahab	Joshua				Moses dies, Joshua's men cross the Jordan & meet Rahab Jericho Falls	
Salman and Rahab have Boaz and 80 years later (50 years after Joshua died), Boaz marries Ruth the widow of Mahlon which allows the Book of Ruth to start out. "It came to pass in the days when the judges ruled!"	Salmon	Rahab	Joshua				Joshua dies at 110 after 30 years of leadership	
Boaz marries Ruth at the age of 80 and Dies after she conceives	Boaz	Ruth	Ruth is half his age				Othniel is first Judge in time of the Judges which weren't necessarily linear, some were like 20 years not lifetimes!	
If Rahab were still alive when Ruth married her son she would be around 110. Regardless she was no doubt the famous one of the Mother-In-Law's of Ruth in the Lineage of David and of course Christ	Obed						Book of Ruth starts out. It was the time of the Judges (total time of Judges around 125 yrs)	
	Jesse						The time of Judges crosses to the time of Saul & the Kings	
	David							

Verse 5 Breakdown:

"For by these loves a mother blessed, not by law or right. Lit a candle in the darkness so her flame could find its light."

We have one more mother to identify as well as understanding the things she is doing and what it represents. A mother blessed. Not by law or right. This relationship is not to another by law, It is a mother blessed by a child, as in the first mention of mother and son which was Rahab and Boaz. The mother is Ruth and She will call her son Obed. His name means "worshiper" and also more poetically relevant, "servant". I am sure he worshipped the beauty of spirit of his mother. The stories she must have told him as he was growing up about both of her mother-in-laws. But servant is directly in line with what God was about in his own son. Perhaps a hand was still guiding?

Ruth lit a candle. First ask what is the result? What is the Light referenced?

This is what Jesus said about this subject as he was talking to the multitudes. Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp-stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

God said YOU are the light! But you need a beginning. A fire has to be started, a match must be ignited, or a flint must be struck. The spark ignites the fire that starts the candle. Then the passion that Ruth felt evidenced by her statement of love in the "your God my God" and "till death parts you and I" speech, that was the flame that burned so brightly that believers would and could see passed down through her lineage from this beautiful story of love that started from God's favorite child... One who knows they are a sinner but has a penitent heart.

But the flame, like a candle, is subject to being extinguished if not full grown... It can flicker and die when the wind blows harshly and when it dies, It takes away the light. Only with care can it truly be transformed into a light worthy of Christ's proclamation that we, you and I, are the Light of the world!

Clues: #1 "A mother blessed" (with child) #2 "Not by law or right". Not a relational circumstance adopted or kin. #3 "Lit a candle in the darkness" (dual meaning to start by giving birth but also providing inspiration through her actions and her love) #4 "so her flame." (The passion, the love, the story of Gods deliverance for her and both of her mother in laws.) #5 "could find its light" (us, the believers that become the church.

Total 5

Verse 6 breakdown:

"Then that candle lit another, and another was entwined till God did light his candle... so that none should ere be blind. "

Now we know that the "lit a candle" reference corresponds to the start of a lineage but also the inspiration of faith. A source of heat has to be present to kindle a spark into flame and fire. So In this love story of the poem and more importantly of the Bible account, it is in essence the inspiration of faith that was passed through lineage from mother to child until the final act of love by God!

The poem ends in the place started by another mother, not named in my poem, but with the same willing penitent heart shown in the three other mothers of the poem. I wonder if Mary in pondering the famous lineage recognized and told in scripture in the passages of old might have been aware of what it means to be a servant of God when she said her proclamation, as shown in Luke 1:38.

What apprehension there must have been, of being a pregnant, unwed, mother which would be looked at as "playing the harlot" so shortly after her betrothal to Joseph. A punishable offense by stoning, yet still she uttered these equally famous words when confronted by an angel carrying God's will for her life, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." She welcomed God's pen to her heart!

Yes she was another mother blessed.... not shown in my Poem except when God lit his Candle, his Son, which was and is and ever shall be the Light of Heaven and Earth. This was a true multi-millennial love story between God and his creation, meant to be so from the very beginning if we can only accept his love and guidance!

Clues: #1 "then that candle lit another". Inspiration of faith and lineage #2 "when God did light his candle" so that all that accept God's Son (THE Light of all in heaven and earth) May never be blind again. Total 2

Meaning:

God accepts as his people, anyone who comes to him. It is not and never was by law or right but by love! He proved that again and again in the Old and New Testament. By our letting him write his law on our heart, mind and soul we are His people!

Expansion: Israel, first in line to receive his gift not because of their lineage, but because of the love that a people (some at least) displayed toward the one and only true God. The problem is too many were not able to make the jump from the confines of the law and being "chosen" to the real meaning God intended. Throughout the Old and New testament he showed it again and again through those he chose to be his children! Was Caiaphas, Jezebel, Herod, Judas... God's people?... The Bible is full of stories of Jewish heritage that were clearly not His People because they only knew the words of law but never allowed them to be placed on their heart! No but A Harlot, An Idol Worshipper, a Roman Centurian, a Tax Collector, a Persecutor of Christ's church. Even a thief on a cross who hung beside the Son of God... THEY were in the end... God's people! Not by law, not by right, but by their Love!

Tools:

The tools to do this are the same tools we should use constantly in the charge that was placed upon us in 2nd Timothy chapter 2 verse 15 "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15 | KJV

Having a couple of online Bibles (many are free) is truly wonderful and often more useful than one bound in paper, but the biggest help to go along with a bible is simply Google search. The way that search engine catalogs is extremely helpful in finding specific things like a specific passage or the meaning of something. That is why I gave two examples of how to use in this document and urge you to use it along with your bible for study. Never in place of, but as a tool for location and illumination to be studied in the Bible itself!

Synopsis:

So there you have it. As I just counted. The Poem had 21 clues in its story. 21 divided by 7 (God's perfect number) = 3 Which is indeed interesting. I didn't start out to make it so, but as I write this, in retrospect, I guess that's a pretty perfect number to have for this poem. Since God is a trinity... Father, Son, and Holy Spirit... perhaps there was some unknown assistance I was not aware of consciously. I just started this with a poem in my heart about some of my favorite parts and people of the Bible, and a desire to give away some gifts. I think I may have been the largest recipient here in just writing this.