

## NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

### LESSON TWELVE: RUTH 1:7-8a

**"Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, Go, return each to her mother's house...."**

Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah had begun their journey out of Moab. Suddenly, Naomi stopped. She urged the young women to return to their own mothers. Why would she do that?

The love that Naomi had for her daughters-in-law, and they for her, comes shinning through the pages of Scripture. Not everything went badly for Naomi in Moab. Yes, she lost her sons, but she also gained daughters.

We have no details about their relationship during the sons' marriages. We can speculate. Picture Naomi teaching Ruth and Orpah how to cook Mahlon's and Chilion's favorite meals. See them sitting by the fire while Naomi tells them stories from Scripture. Imagine them praying together.

We do know their relationship was a good one. After her sons' deaths, Orpah and Ruth chose to stay with Naomi. When Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem Ruth and Orpah chose to go with her. They chose to leave their families and move to a foreign land with their mother-in-law. These were brave ladies!

Naomi must have been moved by the love these girls showered on her. And their love was reciprocated. That is why Naomi suddenly stopped the journey and beseeched the women to rethink their decisions. She realized Ruth and Orpah might not receive a warm reception in Bethlehem. Jews were not fond of the Moabite people. And it was unlikely that Moabite women would find a Jewish man willing to marry them.

Naomi faced a difficult choice of her own. If she sent Ruth and Orpah away she would, indeed, be alone. She hadn't seen her family and friends in Bethlehem for ten years. Initially, at least, she'd be an outsider. It would take time to reestablish those lost relationships. She would be sending away loving companions. These were young women she had grown to love, and she knew she would never see them again if she sent them away.

Ruth and Orpah gave their love unselfishly to Naomi. Their motivation was Naomi's well-being. And Naomi responded in kind. She unselfishly relinquished the girls from their commitment to accompany her to Israel. She put their well-being above her own.

Naomi's sojourn into Moab was filled with tragedy. But there were bright spots in the midst of the sorrows. God always works blessing into our trials.

II Thessalonians 5:18 tells us, "In everything give thanks...." We aren't commanded to be thankful for our loss, time of trouble, or trials. We are told to be thankful in (the midst of) the trial, the time of loss, or trouble. God has implanted something good or beneficial in your circumstances. What has God done for you?

*"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28*