

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON TEN: RUTH 1:6

By Sandy Harber

"Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread."

Naomi learned that the famine in Israel was over. Her sojourn in Moab had not been a pleasant one. She arrived in Moab as part of a small family of four. She departed Moab the sole survivor of that foursome.

The Bible doesn't tell us how long after the death of her sons Naomi decided to return to Israel. Whatever the amount of time, it appears that Ruth and Orpah had been residing with her. Neither girl had returned to the home of her parents.

As the story unfolds it becomes obvious that Ruth and Orpah love Naomi very much. No doubt the three widows comforted one another. Perhaps they tried to find a way to sustain themselves living together without the benefit of a husband. But none of them could just go out and get a job. As women, their options were limited.

At some point Naomi decided to go back to Israel alone (see v. 8). She may have been motivated in part by her love for her daughter-in-law. The women were young and could remarry. But that wasn't going to happen as long as she (Naomi) was in the picture. By removing herself from the area, Naomi was giving Ruth and Orpah the opportunity to return to their families without feeling like they had deserted Naomi. This was their best chance for finding new husbands to take care of them.

Naomi "arose" with her daughters-in-law. She got up. She took action. She moved forward.

Grief can be demoralizing. Sorrow can be incapacitating. The temptation to wallow in our emotional pain can be overwhelming. Giving in - giving up - can lead to crippling depression.

We need to move forward with our lives. One painful step at a time. But move. God will be with us every step of the way as we move through the hurt.

And this is the hard part. We have to go through it. Not around it. Nor can we sit in one spot and hope it'll all go away. We have to keep advancing through the tunnel until we emerge into the light at the other end.

"He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Psalm 40:2-3