

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON SEVENTY-NINE: CONCLUSION

The Book of Ruth is the story of two widows: Naomi and Ruth. These women came from different countries and cultures. But what they had in common was grief and sorrow, and faith in God.

Naomi was born into the nation that God had chosen to reveal Himself to mankind. She had the advantage of growing up in a family and community that worshipped the only true and living God. When tragedy struck she correctly understood that God was sovereign. He had control over the affairs of man. And, for His Own reasons, He had allowed her husband and sons to perish in Moab. But, she incorrectly believed that God had withdrawn his favor from her. And this made her bitter.

Ruth, on the other hand, was born into the pagan culture of Moab where the truth of God was unknown. She grew up with people who worshipped the idol Chemosh. Their religious practices included sexual perversions, like homosexuality. Like many of the other pagan cultures around them Moab practiced child sacrifice. But by the grace of God, Ruth met Naomi's family. It was through this family that Ruth was introduced to the true God. And she became a believer.

Both women suffered the loss of a husband. They clung to one another - and to their God. Even Naomi, who thought God was being unfair to her, continued to worship Him.

Naomi and Ruth drew closer to God by abandoning the company of the pagan Moabites and moving to Bethlehem where they were surrounded by God's people. For Naomi it was a return to the place she had come from. It was a step in the right direction toward repairing her relationship to God. For Ruth, the move was a step up in the direction of her spiritual growth. She became part of a community of believers who included God in every aspect of their lives.

Naomi and Ruth faced tragedy with the belief that their God was in control. They knew that He was real and they were not alone. Their faith was not misplaced. God gave them a Kinsman-Redeemer in the person of Boaz. Their stories ended happily with a wedding and a birth.

We each have our own unique story and our own personal sorrow. But we also have the same God Who worked in the lives of Naomi and Ruth. He has a plan for all of us. And that plan may or may not include a happy ending here on earth. But what it does include is a close relationship with Him if we choose to follow His Word.

*"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."
Job 19:25*