

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR COMMENTS

Dear Loved Ones,

Sometimes we don't realize how much our decisions affect others as well as ourselves.

Naomi made a decision to leave the land that God called His own. She and her family moved to the land of Moab where idols were a big part of the lives of the people. She obviously seemed to be conscious of God and realized that her actions may have caused God's affliction.

When we don't honor God in our actions, we often face the possibility of God's judgement. There are many ways that God uses our circumstances to remind us that He is pleased or not pleased. We don't know if it had anything to do with Naomi's loss of her husband and sons or not, but we do know that God still wanted to bless her when she returned to her land. God is patient. He waits 'for a time' to give us a chance to turn around. Unfortunately, we often miss out on His best blessings during that time if we are not walking with God or seeking His direction. However, when we turn our hearts toward Him, He is also quick to receive and renew us. We may still face some consequences of our actions, but He renews our hope. God wants to bless us, but we limit Him by our unfaithfulness. My husband used to say that God will forgive the sin of unplanned pregnancy, but the pregnancy is still there to remind us of sexual promiscuity.

Naomi's loss may not have had anything to do with her decisions. God has a heart for Israel. He was able to bless Naomi in a new way as she returned to His land. We can vote for those who want to bless Israel or ignore those who don't want to bless Israel, but God's blessings will be upon those who bless Israel, and He will judge those who don't care about God's land. This is a blessing that can be personal or even for our country. Our country has been turning away from God for quite a while, but it has become especially concerning in the last few years. There are many who would like to turn away from supporting Israel but doing so would greatly affect our country.

When Naomi decided to return to Israel, she was blessed with a devoted daughter-in-law who later married and gave her a son-in-law that she called a redeemer. Through him her land was redeemed, and she was given an important grandchild. She may not have realized the scope of what that meant. Our precious Jesus became her descendant and our Redeemer. God had a wonderful plan. Naomi became very blessed after her return to Israel.

We don't know when or why God takes our loved ones. We only know that God is in charge. He always wants us to make decisions that He can bless, but He also has a time for each of us. We have very little control. We can make good or bad decisions that might may or may not affect the length of our lives, but God is ultimately the life giver and the one who takes life away. We know he always has a plan. We can always count on God to give us what we need to get through the tough times, if we let Him, no matter what we to go through.

Through Jeremiah, God prophesied that He would bring judgement on the land because the people turned to idols and filled the place with the blood of their children. It sounds terrible, yet millions of children have been aborted in the last 70 years in America. God caused disaster to occur because they

did not listen to His words. (Jeremiah 19:3-6 and 14-15). We are in the last days and may face very epidemic times. God wants to turn our nation around, but we need to turn back to God. There is a spiritual war going on. We have a responsibility to pray. There are many demonic spirits that are being invited into our country through witchcraft and many other entities. Children are taught sexual promiscuity and used for pornography or other evil acts. Our families are under attack. We are given all the tools we need to pray against evil, but we must draw close to God and pray against this evil. Jesus may be coming soon. We need to know that we are ready for God's return, and we need to pray for our families and friends are not ready.

In this same place but at a different time, God said, *"The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you, the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."* – Numbers 6:24-26. God yearns to bless us.

We are given a free will. We can turn away from God or we can cling to His promises and look to Him for direction in our lives. No matter what we have gone through, God wants to restore hope and give us peace. Our redeemer lives. He is coming back. Be ready and pray for others to know him. Those we love need our prayer and care. Our neighbors and friends need God. Our country needs our prayers.

"The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you, the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."

God bless each of you and give you peace. God loves you. May you seek and find His best plan for your life.

Love and prayers,

Sandy Yates