

**"Realities of Motherhood"**

**Ruth 1**

**Introduction:** Happy Mother's Day to all the moms who are here or who are listening on the Livestream. In the sermon for today we are going to look at a mother who lived in a very difficult time for the nation of Israel, her name is Naomi. From her life there are many lessons which every mom can learn and there are lessons for all who are not moms.

Naomi was what I would consider to be a "great mother" or we could say a "great mother-in-law." Her name is forever recorded in the pages of the Word of God and she is here on these pages to help us to learn from.

➤ **The Background**

**Notice Ruth 1:1a**

There is enough information here to help us to get a detailed picture of what was happening.

✓ **The days when the judges ruled.**

These were very difficult days for the people of Israel.

In the days of the judges there was a constant repeat of what is known as a sin cycle which Israel fell into.

**Judges 2:13-19**

<sup>13</sup> *And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.*

<sup>14</sup> *And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.*

<sup>15</sup> *Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.*

<sup>16</sup> *Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.*

<sup>17</sup> And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so.

<sup>18</sup> And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

<sup>19</sup> And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, **and corrupted themselves more than their fathers**, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

The days of the judges just continued to get darker and darker.

### **Judges 21:25**

<sup>25</sup> In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

- ✓ **There was a famine in the land.**

The famine in the land tells us that Israel was in the "sin" part of the sin cycle.

### **Deuteronomy 11:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,

<sup>14</sup> That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.

<sup>15</sup> And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.

<sup>16</sup> Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;

<sup>17</sup> And then the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

## **I. The Choice**

**Notice Ruth 1:1-2**

Now the Holy Spirit focuses upon one family and their trip to Moab. Now we must understand that this family stepped completely out of the will of the Lord. They were attempting to run away from the consequences that Israel was experiencing. To run away was one thing but to go to Moab was something completely different. Moab was considered to be the "garbage can" of the world. Remember where the Moabites came from?

**Genesis 19:36-37**

<sup>36</sup> *Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.*

<sup>37</sup> *And the first born bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.*

Elimelech and Naomi left Bethlehemjudah and took a long journey to Moab. Whose idea was it to go? Some say it was Elimelech's choice to make the journey. But there is something that Naomi says that may shine a different light on the situation.

**Notice Ruth 1:13**

Here we see that she knows the hand of the Lord had gone out AGAINST HER. She did not say, "Against my husband or against me and my husband." She admits that the hand of the Lord was against her. It is very possible that she pushed the issue and that it was her idea to flee to Moab. We know what God said in Genesis 3.

**Genesis 3:16**

<sup>16</sup> *Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*

The woman's desire is to rule over her husband and possibly this was something that Naomi battled with. I want to use this thought for a moment and share a lesson with you.

❖ **Moms make mistakes.**

Many mothers today put themselves under so much pressure to be the perfect mom to her kids and the perfect wife to her husband. When there are mistakes that are made, she is then extremely hard on herself. Let me just remind you ladies that there are no perfect moms and there are no perfect wives. You will make mistakes and what you need to do is confess your sin, own your mistakes, learn from them, and move on. Mistakes do not mean

that God is finished with you. Many moms have made mistakes and were still used by the Lord.

**Eve** made several great mistakes. She listened to the Devil, she misquoted the Word of God, she ate of the forbidden fruit, and she gave the fruit to her husband. God used Eve to give birth to Seth and keep the promise of the Messiah alive.

**Sarah** made a great mistake when she suggested that Abraham marry Hagar. She was later used by God to give birth to Isaac.

We can also consider the men who have sinned and see how the Lord used them after they repented and were restored back into fellowship. The point is all moms make mistakes and they are still useable in the Lord's hands.

## II. The Sorrow

### Notice Ruth 1:2-5

Naomi's husband died and about ten years later her sons died. Why did they marry women from Moab? Possibly Naomi pushed for them to marry. Whatever the reason it was certainly against the will of God to marry outside the nation of Israel. When the two sons died there were now three widows left in this foreign land.

*To be a childless widow was to be among the lowest, most disadvantaged classes in the ancient world. There was no one to support you, and you had to live on the generosity of strangers. Naomi had no family in Moab, and no one else to help her. It was a desperate situation.*

Did Elimelech and his sons die because of running to Moab? We do not know the answer because we are not told. There have been many people who have stepped outside the will of God and did not die. One thing we do know is that Naomi felt great sorrow from her losses.

❖ **Some moms experience great sorrow.**

For each of us God has a path to walk. Some of those paths have some very deep dark valleys on them. This valley that Naomi was in was incredibly dark and it was something that she would never forget.

### Application:

Some of you moms have been through some very dark valleys and some of you will experience deep dark valleys in the future. Let me give you some Truth to grasp in those times.

### Isaiah 45:1-3

Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

<sup>2</sup> I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

<sup>3</sup> And **I will give thee the treasures of darkness**, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.

Within those valleys there are treasures that you will only find as you pass through the seasons of darkness. When these seasons come upon you then you must understand that you are never alone.

**Psalm 34:17-19**

<sup>17</sup> The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

<sup>18</sup> **The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.**

<sup>19</sup> Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

**Psalm 23:4**

<sup>4</sup> Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: **for thou art with me;** thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

**Isaiah 43:2-3a**

<sup>2</sup> When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

<sup>3</sup> For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour:

In the seasons of darkness there is a Rock which you can cling to.

**Psalm 61:1-2**

Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

<sup>2</sup> *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*

The Rock is Jesus Christ and He our stability as the storms sweep over us.

### III. The Return

#### Notice Ruth 1:6-20

The sin cycle had reached the rescue stage and there was now bread in Israel. Naomi then decided to return. She is not bitter with God and we know that because if she was bitter, she would go away from the Lord instead of returning.

#### Application:

This is what great moms do. They may make mistakes and they made go through some very dark valleys but they do not blame the Lord and they make their way back to Him.

#### Notice Ruth 1:20 again.

Naomi referred to God as "Almighty." The word Almighty is "El Shaddai" which means "God all Powerful." The idea in this name is that God is more powerful than any situation that we face. This was how Naomi viewed God in the valley she was in. She had lost her husband and her two sons but she knew that God was all powerful. God had a plan for Naomi and there was nothing that could hinder God's plan. This is a tremendous statement about how Naomi trusted the Lord even when her entire world had fallen apart. She knew God's power was not limited because of what she had come upon her.

#### Genesis 17:1-4, 15-17, 21

*And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.*

<sup>2</sup> *And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.*

<sup>3</sup> *And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,*

<sup>4</sup> *As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.*

<sup>15</sup> *And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.*

<sup>16</sup> *And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.*

<sup>17</sup> *Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?*

<sup>21</sup> *But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.*

Here we see the application behind the name El Shaddai. Abraham and Sarah would have a son when he was 100 and she was 90, both beyond the childbearing years. But God's power was not limited because of human ability. He had made a covenant and He would be faithful to the covenant.

**Conclusion:**

The realities of a mom's life:

1. There will be mistakes.
2. There will be seasons of darkness and sorrow.
3. God is not limited because of what you are facing.