

Year A #145
Making A Decision
030704-5

Hello! This is Dorothy -

I would like us to turn to that little book, the **Book of Ruth**, the book which follows **Judges** and before **Samuel**. I am talking about names this morning. There is a name that sometimes we carry that we wish our mother had never called us! In the Bible, you will find that with very many names, there are reasons behind them. *Naomi*, the wife of Elimelech, in **chapter 1**, means *pleasant*. I think that is a lovely name. Could you imagine being around a husband and being called *pleasant*? What a blessing she must have been to that little family! And what a beautiful name for some of you who are called Naomi. This husband and wife had two children, but I do not know the whole medical history of those two children. Their names were *Mahon* and *Chilion* — *Sick* and *Pining*. So it was not a good scene that the sons that God gave them in a foreign land were not very well.

You see, they had forsaken the home of *bread and praise*. They had left Bethlehem-judah. They had felt they would go from the famine and find a way to get out of their troubles. But there with their own children, they were already having problems. Unfortunately, these two boys that they had grew up just to the level that they could, in turn, reach an age to take a wife. As they took wives, but we understand

that the tragedy was that the father, Elimelech and the two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, all died. So, here is a woman called *Pleasant* suddenly having the death of the one who called himself *my God is King*, and the deaths of their two sons, *Sick and Pining*. She is left in a foreign land with her two daughters-in-law. These two daughters-in-law, really did not really know anything about the God Naomi had learned to trust and know and had been raised with: the God of the Word of God — the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

I believe in the timing of all this, there was much heart-searching. I do not know anything about the two marriages, the marriage with the boy called Mahlon and his wife, Orpah. I do not know what impact that husband had on the wife to tell her about the God, the living God, the eternal God, the Creator God. I do not know that he was able to have an impact to bring her from her false gods that she worshiped.

You see, both of these girls belonged to a tribe called Moab. Moab had been a people which had resisted those who moved forward, loving the eternal God. We are told in **Deuteronomy 23:3** that they had been excluded from being allowed to come before God. They were people who had turned their back on giving hospitality and care which the children had gone through. They worshiped evil gods, who did great harm to the people.

What a mess to be in! Here is a woman and she has two daughters-in-

law. Somehow or other, they are all in a terrible, destitute state, but, most of all, where was the head of the home who said, *My God is King?* Then here she has a daughter-in-law, who was obviously very attached to her false gods. But she did have another daughter-in-law. This daughter-in-law was Ruth. When the time came for what they had to do, which was to go right back to where the sin had first been committed in turning their back on the God who had promised them care and provision even in the land of famine. When that hour came, there was Naomi having to face also that she would lose these two daughters-in-law, because they were three women living together. She came to that place and thought these daughters-in-law would go back to their own families. But, I am sure to her total amazement, there was a girl who felt there was something about the God that Naomi and her previous father-in-law, Elimelech, had worshiped: the living God, the eternal God, the Creator God. She wanted to put her trust with Naomi and to go to this strange land and to follow, by faith as it were, to find whatever this God could provide. So, she stayed with her mother-in-law.

What kind of a decision are you up to today? Are you in the place that you see things from what you can get from them? What is the best material aspect on this? Or are you willing to make your decisions in life concerning what the Lord God wants of you? Are you willing to walk away from the familiar and to follow what the Spirit of the Lord

says will bring you to the place where the Lord has prepared that You know Him in intimacy to follow His will? I trust so. Would you write and let me know how God leads in this?

In Jesus' Name. Amen.