



Red de Mujeres y Justicia de Género de las Iglesias Luteranas de América Latina y el Caribe - FLM

Rede de Mulheres e Justiça de Gênero das Igrejas Luteranas da América Latina e Caribe - FLM

Women and Gender Justice Network of the Lutheran Churches of Latin America and the Caribbean - LWF

## **BIBLE STUDY 10**

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### **The Sorority of Ruth and Naomi**

#### **Book of Ruth. Chapter 1-4.**

Let's briefly study the story of these two women of God, women like us, strong, intelligent and obedient to the Word of the Ruah. We started by looking at the framework of this environment, which was not a very pleasant time, it was a time of hunger, violence and injustice, since Israel was dominated by "Caudillos", and to make matters worse, Naomi had lost her husband Elimelech and then years later her two children died.

Naomi was left a widow and with her also her two daughters-in-law: Orpah and Ruth, they were vulnerable to society, three unprotected women. Ruth decided to support Naomi as if she were her mother, her friend and family partner, here is a very strong union between women, facing difficult situations emotionally also financially, two widowed women who accompanied each other, faced difficulties together. And with a firm decision Ruth says to Naomi, your God will be my God, your people will be my people.

#### **What virtues can we observe in these two women?**

**Naomi** = noble, generous, intelligent woman, counselor and loved God

**Ruth** = active, loyal, intelligent, daring woman, with a purpose to jeopardize her honor in order to perpetuate the survival of the family that she had chosen and also had adopted the faith of her beloved mother-in-law.

#### **Can there be a good relationship between women and even more between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law?**

Naomi and Ruth demonstrate a beautiful relationship between women, not as the patriarchal system has taught us to see ourselves as rivals for centuries, even mentioning jokes in bad taste like: "Mother-in-law is better to have her but from far", or through movies, series or soap operas, they want to make us see the mother-in-law as the bad one, they want to see us fighting and seeing us as enemies.

Check out this example of bad jokes:

I would like my mother-in-law to be a star.

- yeah? Why? Can she take you to Hollywood?

- No, so she'll be 3,000 light years away from me.



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We can see that it is a form of discrimination.

**Let's think about it, do you think this is fair?**

**Do you know cases of fights between daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law, or do you know cases of daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law who love and respect each other?**

We continue with Ruth, her story motivates us to have a good relationship between women, here we see two women with a deep-rooted value: solidarity and sorority activated in them, in the midst of a situation of economic misery, they had no provision to eat, there was violence, a totally patriarchal environment, and of course we know that as there is hunger and violence, the power subdues even more and does not give opportunities to a life free of violence and to an environment of peace, which was not very promising for these two women.

Naomi's good advice in going and picking the ears of barley to the field and making Boaz known who was the owner of that harvest motivated an intelligent, daring Rut, in the first place to be the provider of her home, working with her hands and thinking how to act with intelligence and humility in a country that was not even her own, I imagine, that many thought, that a upstart was coming, to take away their bread, their livelihood. **Can you imagine how difficult it could have been for Ruth in an unknown country? Let's talk a little bit about how you would feel if you were in your place.**

God's plan was done and Ruth knew her mission, did not give up, firmly visualized her purpose, listening and obeying the good advice of her mother-in-law, joining her heart to Naomi, with such great feelings of sisterhood, listening to her advice that the It would lead to reaching provision for her table but also her boldness, loyalty and purpose would make her act, she does not complain about the situation, she only believes, acts and advances, because she knows that the God of Naomi and His grace goes before her.

Let's see how Ruth overcomes all forms of racism, exclusion, discrimination, a woman taken from the hand of God even if she was a foreign Moabite. We see the disadvantages that she had: she was a woman, a foreigner and a widow, anyone in her condition felt the world above her. However, God shows us in this story that He does respect people, but loves all humanity equally, regardless of race, nationality, gender or creeds.

### **REFLECTION:**

Today we are going through difficult times in our homes due to confinement and in the entire society, a condition caused by the Corona Virus, the world pandemic of the 21st century. This social situation has become more acute, violence and



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hunger are two aspects that permeate our poor countries in Latin America. For this reason, we are suffering even more, since the “leaders”, the corrupt rulers have stripped us of our resources, have blatantly stolen the money from the population, resulting in a lack of biosafety supplies and medical supplies to face this critical health situation. What's worse, we women face this outrage at home and we are the hardest hit by this crisis. The question is: What did Ruth do in her situation, what should we do in our situation?

### **How can we women be supportive in this Pandemic?**

Just as Ruth listened to the advice of her mother-in-law whom she loved, and showed solidarity with her, now let the Ruah lead us to act with empathy, sorority and solidarity with the most vulnerable people in our society, the discriminated and excluded. It is always important to work on these values all the time, but even more in times of crisis. Ruth was not paralyzed in the face of the crisis, but rather motivated to be brave, to strive and to find ways to survive and to find a place where she would be dignified as a person, together with Noemi they looked for him, they succeeded, her sorority and faith encouraged them to reach their life goal, remaining in history forever, Obed would emerge from her womb who establishes the genealogy of King David up to Jesus.

Images that can be used to suspect that women are conspiring to unite for a beautiful friendship and work together to achieve new ways of living for us, our families and our society.