

SERMON NOTES

Sunday 18 June

sunnysidechurch

Stories of faith: Naomi

Bible passage: Ruth 1.11-22; Lamentations 3.19-26

Naomi's story: remaining faithful when experiencing great loss

The problem of suffering is a real challenge to faith and mission. Naomi's story show us how we might respond:

1. Naomi Laments (Ruth 1.20-21)

- Naomi is honest with God and others about how she feels
- Lamentation is vital in tough times (Jesus did it!)

2. Naomi gets no answer

- Naomi does not discover why God let her men die (cp Job)
- Getting an answer to why is not always possible or helpful

3. Naomi trusts in the kindness of God

- Naomi continues to believe in the kindness of God
- Even in her lament she uses the name Shaddai (covenant name for God who protects and provides)

4. Naomi does not let her grief consume her

- She continues to care for Ruth and others and want God's best for them

Conclusion

Naomi's story of faith is one of perseverance and trust in Shaddai (Almighty God)

Some questions for discussion

1. Can you think of a time when your faith has been deeply challenged by circumstances? What helped you to persevere?
2. Read Ruth 1.11-22. What do you notice about this passage?
3. Naomi is very honest with God and others. Have you found times when lamenting has been helpful in your life?
4. Read Lamentations 3.19-26. The writer moves from lament to hope. How might Naomi calling God *Shaddai* (the covenant name for God who is the protector and provider) be important?
5. Rebecca said that why is not always a useful question to help us when things are hard. Has this been your experience?
6. Naomi trusts in the kindness of God to her and others. Can you think of times that this has helped you when things have been hard?
7. What is God asking you to do as a result of what he has said to you through these passages? It might be something to pray about, something to think more about, something he wants you to talk to someone about or something he wants you to do. Make a note of it so you don't forget!

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail. Lamentations 3.22

Why not spend some time thanking God for his faithfulness and pray for those who need to experience his compassion today?

Revd Rebecca Fardell