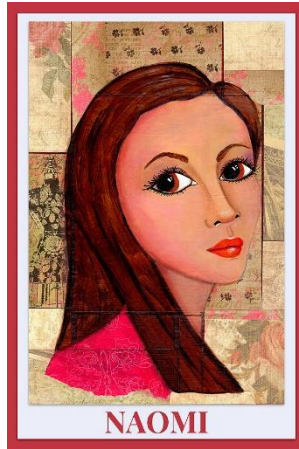




Naomi



Details of Artwork:

Dated: February 2021

Author: Yobeth Puckett, Artist

Media: Mixed Media Acrylic

Based on Ruth 1-4

Characteristics: Evangelizer, Loving, Kind

Synopsis: More than a story of two women, a Jewess and a Moabitess. Naomi was out of God's will. She was living in a land among people that God had told them not to mingle with. The Moabites worshipped strange gods and it was easy to fall into their ways.

Story: Elimelech brought his wife and two sons to Moab from their home in Bethlehem-Judah because there was a famine in their land.

They settled in Moab even though they knew God had told them not to mix with the people there. Naomi should have been especially concerned about settling in Moab knowing that in time her sons would grow up and want to marry. Growing up among the Moabites they would grow accustomed to their ways and more comfortable choosing a Moabitess wife.

Even after Naomi's husband died, she continued to live in Moab with her two sons. They both eventually married Moabitesses, Ruth and Orpah. We don't know if Naomi counseled her sons against marrying outside their faith. We do know that she grew to love both of her

daughters in law enough to put their welfare above her own. They dwelled there about 10 years and both sons died.

After her husband and both sons died Naomi heard that the famine was over. She decided to return to her homeland. She told both of her daughters-in-law to return to their mothers where they could be with their relatives and gods and find husbands of their own people.

Both girls protested. They loved her and wanted to go with Naomi. Eventually Orpah agreed to return to her people but Ruth clave to Naomi.

Chapter 1 verses 15-17 tells of the conversation between Naomi and Ruth. Naomi said, "Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried;"

Apparently, even in Naomi's backslidden state, she was still witnessing and teaching her daughters-in-law about her God. She was kind, loving, and lived a life that was worth emulating. Ruth turned away from the strange gods the Moabites worshipped and accepted the one true God and His people became her people.

Naomi finally gave in to Ruth's pleas to accompany her and the two went to Bethlehem. There Ruth worked in the fields to glean food for her and Naomi. Boaz, a landowner and near kinsman of Elimelech's, recognized her good character and took an interest in her. Naomi instructed Ruth on how to deal with Boaz as her kinsman redeemer. He redeemed her and married her. They had a son they named Obed. And Obed begat Jesse, Jesse begat David.

When we feel insignificant or unusable, we should remember how God used a backslidden, starving, widow woman to win a woman to faith. And that woman went on to become an ancestor to Jesus Christ.

History: Bethlehem means "the house of bread" and Judah means "praising God".

Deuteronomy 7:3 "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son."

Deuteronomy 23:3 "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever."

Naomi is a type (picture) of a backslider. Even death didn't persuade her to return to "the house of bread" to "praise God". She didn't leave the heathen country after the death of her husband or when her sons married heathen women, or even when both sons died. She didn't go back until she finds out "the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread." (vs 6)

Memory Verse: Jeremiah 20:9b "But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."