**DLCF DAY 2 Seminar 3 November *2018***

**RUTH: STEADFAST AND BRAVE IN THE MIDST OF STORMS**

Ruth 1:1-18; Isaiah 41:10; 43:1,2; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Mattew 24:12,13

Life is full of challenges, problems, storms and wars but God has promised he will be with us even through the Storm. Ruth in our text had storms - the loss of her husband and inlaws, the uncertainty in going back to the land of Isreal, the perils of traveling back to Isreal and the possibility of remaining unmarried. However inspite of these difficult situations in her life, she remained brave and steadfast and did not yield to temptation of going back. The story of Ruth shows that a determined and brave child of God can walk in the midst of storm and come out victoriously.

We should be christians with conviction as those who are steadfast and brave in the midst of storm will definitely emerge victorious with a living testimony on their lips to share. The bible is replete with characters who where unconventional, nonconformist and uncompromising. These include Daniel, Joseph, Job and the three Hebrew children and so on. By extension, God wants us to be courageous in projecting holiness in our campus come what may. “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Mtt 24:12,13)

1. **CERTAINTY AND PURPOSE OF STORMS**

Ruth 1:4,5; Job 14:1; James 1:2,3; Mark 4:35-37; John 16:33

Ruth had just lost her husband Mahlon, her brother inlaw Chilon and her Father inlaw Elimelech. Truly she was full of trouble at this time. She must have been perplexed and in despair of what action or step to take at this point in time. In life, there will be unfavourable circumstances and situations that will come our way. “In this world, ye shall have tribulation.” The fact that we are believers does not mean that challlenges will not come our way. Jesus was in the boat when the storm came to the disciples so God’s presence in our lives does not mean storms will automatically by absent. However God allows them for a purpose which is the trial of our faith that walks patience in us. “Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.” The different challenges that can come our way include –

* Diseases and afflictions
* Death of a loved one
* Dissappointments
* Denials
* Downfalls

However inspite of these challenges that may come, we should put our faith and confidence in God to see us through the time of storm and in due time he will pronounce “Peace be Still”.

1. **CARNALITY AND PARTING BECAUSE OF STORMS**

Ruth 1:9-14; Matthew 14:29-31

Ruth and Orpah decided to follow Naomi to the promised land. They had made a decision to serve the true God. Naomi, however persuaded Ruth and Orpah to go back. At first, both of them lifted up their voice and wept but they still insisted that they would return to the people and God of Naomi. Naomi then explained to them the reality of what they would face in the land of Isreal. She told them that she cannot assure them of a husband in the land of Isreal. With this, the demarcation was drawn between Ruth and Orpah. Orpah went back to her people and gods while Ruth remained with Naomi.

Both Ruth and Naomi were experiencing the same storm at this time. They were both widows and bothe decided to go to the promise land but theirr reasons were not the same. Let us examine why Orpah went back. Her reason for going was based on

* **Comfort and not conviction** John 6:26,27; Matthew 8:19,20; Luke 14:33
* **The World and not the Word** Genesis 9:17,26; John 2:15-17
* **Success and not sacrifice** Phillipians 3:8-10
* **Religion and not Righteousness** 2 Timothy 3:2-5
* **Prosperity and not Persecutions** John 16:33; 2 Timothy 3:12; Mark 10:28-30

Ruth eventually got all these things Orpah was looking for and she got the main thing also "relationship with God" even though she didn't place it as top priority while Orpah lost everything and presently is in hell. What's your choice? Physical or Spiritual? Ruth or Orpah?

1. **CLEAVING AND PERSEVERING INSPITE OF STORMS**

Ruth 1:16-18; Deuteronomy 30:19; Mark 4:39

We have seen the response of Orpah. She was not able to stand the pressure of going to a strange land and meeting with unpleasant circumstances and preferred to go back to her people and her gods because of her lack of conviction in the midst of storms. On the other hand, we want to look at Ruth who was firmly persuaded and resolved to get to the land of Isreal notwithstanding the storms she was currently facing and what she might likely face on getting there. Naomi persuaded her to go back on three occasions for three different reasons by Ruth was steadfast. The challenge is that when we are faced with different reasons to look back and get back to where we are coming from, would we be steadfastly minded and determined Luke Ruth or would we be Luke Orpah? **“ I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:”**

Lets consider the three instances Naomi persuaded Ruth to go back and the reactions of Ruth –

* **Refusal of the pleasures of sin** Ruth 1:7-10; Hebrews 11:24-26; 1 John 2:15-17
* **Reception of the pain of suffering** Ruth 1:11-14; Luke 18:22-24; Phillipians 1:29; Hebrews 12:2; 13;12,13; Luke 14:26,27
* **Readiness for the pressure of solitude** Ruth 1:15-18; Luke 14:26,27; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Matthew 18:8,9; Daniel 1:8

In all thhe storms, she past through, Ruth did not yield to the temptation of going back but persevered to the end. Eventually, the Lord spoke “Peace be still” to her storms and there was a great calm. She eventually got married to Boaz, God prosperred and provided for her needs, she bacame the Ancestress of our Lord Jesus Christ and she is still rememberred today. Ruth 4:13-17.

If you can be corageous despite storms of life and Ruth remain steadfast and committed to the race you have begun, before you know it, the storm will be over and you will inherit God’s blessings now and in eternity.