

EMPTIED TO BE FILLED

RUTH 1-4 | ERIC SIMPSON | JUNE 13, 2021

Ruth 1:18-22

¹⁸When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her. ¹⁹So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?"

²⁰"Don't call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. ²¹I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me." ²²So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

- Emptying

illness, loss of a loved one, infertility, fractured family, jobless, homeless, spouse-less, child-less

Mara = bitter, circumstances of life leaving a lining of bitterness around your soul

Ruth 2:1-2

¹Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz. ²And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter."

- Wondering

Ruth is a foreign woman in a foreign land with a foreign family. She's a widow. She's trying to support a depressed mother-in-law. She's living in the question mark.

Lord, where is all this going? How did I get here? Why am I here? What's next? Is this as good as its going to get?

- Filling

Ruth 4:9-10

⁹Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion and Mahlon. ¹⁰I have also acquired Ruth the Moabitess, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from the town records. Today you are witnesses!"

Ruth 4:16-17

¹⁶Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. ¹⁷The women living there said, "Naomi has a son." And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Kinsman-redeemer = nearest male blood relative to the widow; responsibilities included marrying the widow, bearing children with her, caring for her as she aged, handling property and business transactions on her behalf...etc.

The loss of Mahlon became the gain of Boaz.

The departure from Moab became the community in Israel.

The barrenness of the last chapter became the fruitfulness of the current one.

The emptying made room for the filling.