

NAOMI - RUTH CONNECTION

LESSON ELEVEN: RUTH 1:7a

"Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was...."

Once Naomi made the decision to return to Bethlehem she began to act. She "went forth out of the place where she was." She was leaving Moab forever. Ten years earlier she had taken refuge from the famine in Israel. But life as a stranger among people who did not speak her language, follow her customs, or worship her God was hard. She had buried her husband there. She had buried her only children there. Emotionally, she had buried her heart there. She determined to reverse course and return "home."

Her destination: Bethlehem, where God had "visited" His people with food. The famine was over. For Naomi, her spiritual famine would be over, too, when she rejoined the people of her God. She would soon be in a place where she could join in the fellowship of worshipping the God of Israel.

Naomi had come full circle. She was back where she started. She left Bethlehem with her husband and two sons. She returned without them. She left Bethlehem the matriarch of a small family. She returned without an heir or any hope of producing one. She left Bethlehem a property owner. She returned having forfeited her rights to the property due to the length of her stay in Moab. As she said herself, she went out full and came back empty (see v. 21). Naomi had lost virtually everything. She was, in effect, a broken woman.

Sometimes we have to reach this place before God can accomplish His purpose in us. It is when we are at the lowest place that He will reach down, pick us up, and place our feet on the Solid Rock.

But we have to be willing to come forth out of the place where we are. Let go of the negative thoughts and feelings. Give them over to God. God can fix a broken heart, but He must have all the pieces. We must allow Him to mold and shape us into a vessel fit for His use.

"I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:1-2