

# Epilogue:

## Na'omi's Satisfaction and Fullness

### 4: 13-17

**DIG:** What does redemption mean? What kind of woman must Na'omi have been for the women of Beit-Lechem to speak of her so highly? How was the birth of Obed announced? How is Ruth's selfless devotion celebrated? What is the point of this unusual birth announcement? **How was Obed a blessing?**

**REFLECT:** There are two books in the Bible bearing the title of women's names. Both experienced successful cross-cultural marriages. Is there a lesson to be learned with respect to this? If so, what is it? How does God's treatment of Ruth show His grace and power? Ruth left behind an eternal legacy. What legacy do you want to leave behind for your family? What has the book of Ruth taught you about deepening your relationship with the Lord?

ADONAI had been gracious to Ruth back in Mo'av by giving her the faith to believe in Him and be saved (Ephesians 2:8-9). His grace continued when she moved to Beit-Lechem, for He guided her to the field of Bo'az, where their friendship eventually grew into love. YHVH's grace continued at the town gate, where Mr. So-and-so rejected the role of her *go'el* and Bo'az stepped right in and purchased her. After their marriage, the LORD poured out His grace on Ruth and Bo'az by giving them a son, whom they named Obed, or *servant*.<sup>100</sup>

**The Baby:** So Bo'az took Ruth and she became his wife. The LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son (4:13). So ten years in Mo'av brought misery and emptiness, while a few months in Judah brought satisfaction and fullness. Ruth's social progression is complete. First, she was a foreigner (2:10), then she was lower than a servant (2:13), then she became a maidservant (3:9), and now a wife (4:13). God gave Ruth a son and not a daughter, allowing the family line to continue.<sup>101</sup>

The women said to Na'omi, "Praise be to ADONAI, who to this day has not left you without a redeeming kinsman. The reference is not to Bo'az, but to Obed who had just been born, because he will one day redeem the whole of Na'omi's possessions. As the son of Ruth, he was also the son of Na'omi, and as such, would take away the shame of childlessness from her. Ruth was the only one who could raise up a son to inherit the estate of Elimelek. So Obed will comfort her and tend to her in her old age, and therefore become

her true *go'el*. **May he become famous throughout Isra'el!** Still speaking about Na'omi, the women said: In contrast to her former bitterness, **Obed will renew (shuwb) your life and sustain you in your old age (4:14).**

For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth (4:15). In a society that preferred sons to daughters, this was quite a statement. Seven sons symbolized the supreme blessing that could come to a Jewish family (First Samuel 2:5; Job 1:2). Ruth had exhibited true **chesed** (see Af - **The Concept of Chesed**). In Leviticus 19:34 Moshe instructed Isra'el to love the foreigner, but now it is the foreigner from Mo'av who will show Isra'el what this means. Once she was able to do so, Ruth took the child from the home of Bo'az to the home of Na'omi.<sup>102</sup> There story closes with a touching domestic scene. Then Na'omi took the baby in her arms and cared for him (4:16). The women living there declared: Na'omi has a son, meaning a descendent. And they proclaimed his significance (Hebrew: *qara'shem*).

**God would use this baby to be a source of blessing to many.** Na'omi accepted the name and became the nurse for Obed. The emptiness she felt at the end of the Scene One, had now been replaced by fullness through God's grace. **He was the father of Jesse, the father of David (4:17).** Therefore, Ruth was David's great-grandmother.

**Obed was a blessing to Bo'az and Ruth:** This was no ordinary baby, for he was YHVH's gift to Ruth and Bo'az. In reality, every baby is a unique gift from ADONAI. And every baby deserves a loving home and caring parents who will raise them with the Lord's kind of discipline and guidance (Ephesians 6:4 CJB). What a great privilege it is to bring new life into the world and then to guide that life so it matures to become all that God has planned.

**Obed was a blessing to Na'omi:** Obed restored life back into Na'omi after the death of her husband and two sons. Every grandparent can attest to the fact that they feel young again when the grandchildren come to visit. Obed allowed Na'omi to look forward in her life rather than looking back. When she held Obed in her arms, her world was at peace. Obed would be a blessing to Na'omi in another way: He would one day take care for the family that brought him into the world, including his grandmother. He would live up to the name *servant*.

**Obed was a blessing to Beit-Lechem:** The child would bring fame to both the family name and the name of his native town. Elimelek's name almost disappeared from Isra'el, but Obed would make that name famous and would bring glory to Beit-Lechem. This happened, of course, through the life and ministry of King David, and of David's greater son, Jesus Christ.

**Obed was a blessing to Isra'el:** Obed was the grandfather of David, Isra'el's greatest king and a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). When the name of David is mentioned, we usually think of either Goliath or Bathsheba. David did commit a great sin with Bathsheba, but he was also a great man of faith whom YHVH used to build the kingdom of Isra'el. He led the people in overcoming their enemies, expanding their inheritance, and, most of all, worshipping ADONAI. He wrote worship songs for the Levites to sing and devised musical instruments for them to play. He spent a lifetime gathering wealth for the building of the Temple, and the LORD gave him the plans for the Temple so Solomon could finish the job. Whether he had a harp or hymnal, a sling or a sword in his hand, David was a great servant of God who brought untold blessings to Isra'el.

**Obed would bring blessing to the whole world:** The greatest thing YHVH did for David was not to give him victory over his enemies or wealth for the building of the Temple. The greatest privilege YHVH gave him was that of being the ancestor of Yeshua Messiah. David wanted to build a house for God, but God told him He would build a house (family) for David (Second Samuel 7). David knew that Messiah would come from the kingly tribe of Y'hudah (Genesis 49:8-10), but no one knew which family in Judah would be chosen. Ha'Shem chose David's family, and the Redeemer would be known as the son of David (Mattityahu 1:1).<sup>103</sup>

This is how Ruth, a seemingly ill-fated Moabite woman whose loyalty and faith had led her away from her own people and carried her as a stranger into the land of Isra'el, became a mother in the royal line that would eventually produce that nation's first great king. Her best-known offspring, Messiah, would be Abraham's Seed and Eve's hoped-for Deliverer.

Ruth is a fitting symbol of every believer, and even of the Church itself - redeemed, brought into a position of great favor, endowed with riches and privilege, exalted to be the Redeemer's own bride, and loved by Him with great affection. That is why the extraordinary story of her redemption should make every believer's heart pound with profound gladness and thanksgiving for the One who, likewise, has redeemed us from our sin.<sup>104</sup>