

Ruth 1:20-21

But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?"

Have you been going through some really tough times lately, and maybe you are feeling like Naomi, and as you were reading today's devotional you felt that you could relate? Maybe you are not sure what she said means, but still you can relate. In the NLT it put it this way.

† **Ruth 1:20-21 (NLT)** *"Don't call me Naomi," she responded. "Instead, call me Mara, for the Almighty has made life very bitter for me. I went away full, but the LORD has brought me home empty. Why call me Naomi when the LORD has caused me to suffer and the Almighty has sent such tragedy upon me?"*

*The Almighty has made life very bitter for me.
The LORD has caused me to suffer and the Almighty has sent such tragedy upon me.*

If you are not familiar with what's going on, I would encourage you to read the book of Ruth, it's only four chapters and the end is awesome.

But until you do, I will give you a Reader's Digest version of what's going on.

Naomi was married to Elimelech and they had two sons. But there was a famine in Judah, so they moved to the country of Moab. Sometime after they got there, the dad died, and the two sons married Moab women. Afterwards, the two sons died within a ten year span. So, here is Naomi and her two daughter-in-law's. Her husband and sons are dead. Naomi then heard that there was food in Judah so she started to go there. But before she did, she told her two daughter-in-law's to go back to their family. One of them did, but the other one, Ruth, refused and she chose to stick with her mother-in-law. Finally they get back to Judah and that's where today's devotional verse come in.

Now, you may be thinking, "Wow, you're right Steve. Naomi had every right to be bitter and feel like God had left her."

I would agree, if we look at thing according to the worlds point of view or even our human point of view. But God, oh yeah, I love that phrase "But God!!!"

But God had everything working out just the way He wanted them to. What we see as tragedy, God sees as an opportunity.

So you may be thinking (if you never read the book of Ruth before, or forget how it ends) how can God create something great or even good out of the death of a woman's husband and her only two sons?

"But God" yep, only God could create something awesome out of such tragedy.

So how did He do something awesome here? Okay, spoiler alert, do not read ahead if you want to read the whole story for yourself.

For those who want to know now, Ruth, Naomi's daughter-in-law ended up meeting and marrying this guy named Boaz. "Okay, I still don't get it" you may be thinking. Well let me post the last couple verses of the book of Ruth for you.

† **Ruth 4:21-22** *Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.*

Simply put, Ruth is the great grandmother of King David. But not only that, but Ruth is also in the lineage of Jesus.

† **Matthew 1:5-6 (KJV)** *And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias;*

So, what's going on in your life right now that you don't understand what God is doing? Are you feeling like a Naomi right now? Are you thinking nothing good can come out of this tragedy?

If you feel that way, remember one tiny phrase which speaks volumes throughout the bible, and in your case as well. "BUT GOD!!!"

† **Psalm 73:26** *My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*

† **Romans 5:8** *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

† **2 Corinthians 7:6 (NLT)** *But God, who encourages those who are discouraged, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus.*