

From Famine To Fullness: The Hope of the Harvest
Ruth 1:19-22

I. When Our Perceptions Do Not Reflect Our Reality (19-21)

A. What's in a name?

1. Naomi – “pleasant”
2. Mara – “bitter”
 - a. Perhaps it was the long absence (10 years)
 - b. Perhaps it was the sufferings endured
 - c. Perhaps it was the sadness of spirit
 - d. Perhaps it was all of the above
 - e. The people were uncertain of it being Naomi

B. The pain of a difficult providence

1. The Almighty is against me
2. Went out full, come back empty
3. Our actions impact everyone in the community

II. At The Beginning of the Barley Harvest (22)

A. The timing is of great significance

1. Most date the beginning of barley harvest to coincide (more or less) with the timing of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread
2. Passover – celebration of God's deliverance of the Israelites from the 10th plague through the substitutionary sacrifice of a lamb

3. Feast of Unleavened Bread – essentially a continuation of the Passover: it brought about the remembrance of the Israelites affliction as they fled Egypt in haste after the plagues. It lasted one week, with special offerings on each day. The second day it included the first harvest of barley as a wave offering

B. Why This Matters

1. The people's minds would have been oriented toward God's great power in both judgment and deliverance
2. The people's minds would have been focused on the sacrificial nature of God's salvation
3. The people's minds would have been aware of their need to abide in the covenant promises

C. Joy and hope are not really about present circumstances; joy and hope are about a constant remembrance that God is faithful to keep His Word