

A HERMENEUTICAL STUDY OF THE THEOLOGY OF *HE'-RA'* (AFFLICTION) IN
THE NAOMI NARRATIVE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS TO THE STRUGGLES OF THE
FAMILIES OF THE OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS

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By
ADIEL NATHAN G. CASPE

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ABSTRACT

Poverty has been the common reason cited for the diaspora of Filipinos to find work and sustain their needs as well as that of their family. *Hê-ra'* (affliction) is a common struggle experienced by the OFWs and their families to survive. This research work aimed to study the Naomi narrative in Ruth 1:1-22 to specifically find out the theology of *hê-ra'* and its implications to the struggles of the families of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). It utilized the method that included exegetical, analytical and historical presentation on the Naomi narrative focused on the analysis of the content of the Biblical passage in its original text. Affliction is part of living in this world. *Hê-ra'* is used to describe affliction or being afflicted, what causes someone to experience pain or suffering. It has a disciplinary value, a form of divine teaching for God's people to experience His abundance as part of His plan for all creation. This teaching suggests that *hê-ra'* is God's creative design for each person to grow in the knowledge of Him, for a better life and purpose.