

A Brutal Reality

Ruth 1:1-5

The Bible is the most honest and brutally _____ book!

1. Free For All (v.1a)

In the days when the judges ruled... (Ruth 1:1)

The time of the Judges was a period of lawlessness and _____ in Israel

Judges 21:25 *"In those days Israel had no king; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."*

No one _____ to God, to their parents, to police—they do whatever they want!

These were extremely wicked days (Judges 19:1-20:13)

2. Famine (v.1b)

There was a famine in the land (Ruth 1:1)

Bethlehem means "house of bread"—so there is no bread in the "house of bread"

God _____ His provision and His blessing on them.

Not all suffering is a result of our _____, but some of it is and it's always good to ask:

Lord, have we lived in a way that is _____ to you? Is this a consequence of sin in my life?

In this case, yes! *Everyone was doing what was right in their own eyes.*

Famine was a sign of God's _____ (Deut. 28:23ff)

"Pain is God's megaphone" (C.S. Lewis)

3. Failure (v.2)

Elimelech's name means "God is my _____" but he does not live like it

We're in Bethlehem with God's people, but the economic climate looks better in Moab.

So he moves his family to Moab.

Who are the Moabites?

They lived about 50 miles away

They worshipped a _____ god named *Chemosh the abomination of Moab* (1 Kings 11:7)

They descend from a guy named Lot, who was Abraham's _____

Lot's daughters get him drunk and sleep with him.

As a result of incest, she gave birth to a son named _____.

God's people are not to move to Moab, worship their false gods, and marry Moabites

Elimelech's _____ is moving his family to Moab

He moves them away from God's people and God's _____ in Bethlehem

Mahlon and Kilion married Moabite women.

Is it ok for a believer to marry an _____? No!

Moabite women were seductive and promiscuous! (Numbers 25:1-3)

Deut. 7 says, *"Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, ⁴ for they will turn your children _____ from following me to serve other gods"*

4. Funerals (v.3-5)

Elimelech died. After they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Kilion also died and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband. 3 Funerals

Can you imagine how _____ Naomi was?

Naomi is now childless, widowed, impoverished and old.

5. Facing Reality (v.6-18)

This is not working! God's people and presence are over there. We are over here.

We need to go back to _____.

"The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!"

Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and _____." (Ruth 1:9)

She knows that as foreigners there's little hope for remarriage back home.

I've got nothing. Let's face _____.

Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me?"

Ruth's Loyalty and Devotion 1:16-18

But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will _____, and where you stay I will _____. Your people will be my people and your God my God.¹⁷ Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me."¹⁸ When Naomi realized that Ruth was _____ to go with her, she stopped urging her.

Ruth's classic expression of _____ and devotion is often recited at weddings!

6. Faith Journey (v.19-22)

¹⁹ So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem.

This is a _____ journey for two unaccompanied women to make (Luke 10:30)

Thieves frequently lurked along these roads (near Jericho)

A New Beginning

²² So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

Move _____ God's people and God's presence and God will bless you.

Naomi is bitter and broken, but she is _____ about it

The church should be a hospital for bitter and _____ people

We should welcome widows and aliens and care for them

God is Sovereign and Good

In God's _____, these two women return to Bethlehem just as **Barley Harvest was beginning**

All this happens in the days when there is no king...but there is _____

A _____ will come from the line of Ruth

Jesus is born in Bethlehem

We can be _____ with such a loving King who went to a cross to suffer and die for us

We can be _____ about our pain and our brokenness

He can heal us and redeem us!