



THE BOOK OF RUTH: When Pain Tries to Define You

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Mount Paran North

Pain Is Unavoidable

¹ In the days when the judges ruled in Israel, a severe famine came upon the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah left his home and went to live in the country of Moab, taking his wife and two sons with him. ² The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife was Naomi. Their two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in the land of Judah. And when they reached Moab, they settled there.

Ruth 1:1-3 NLT

Pain Will Try to Define You

⁶ Then Naomi heard in Moab that the Lord had blessed his people in Judah by giving them good crops again. So Naomi and her daughters-in-law got ready to leave Moab to return to her homeland. ⁷ With her two daughters-in-law she set out from the place where she had been living, and they took the road that would lead them back to Judah.

Ruth 1:6-7 NLT

¹⁵“Look,” Naomi said to her, “your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. You should do the same.” ¹⁶But Ruth replied, “Don’t ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. ¹⁷Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!” ¹⁸When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she said nothing more. ¹⁹So the two of them continued on their journey. When they came to Bethlehem, the entire town was excited by their arrival. “Is it really Naomi?” the women asked. ²⁰“Don’t call me Naomi,” she responded. “Instead, call me Mara, for the Almighty has made life very bitter for me. ²¹I 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?”

Ruth 1:15-21 NLT

Pain Is Redeemed when You Bring It to God

So Naomi returned from Moab, accompanied by her daughter-in-law Ruth, the young Moabite woman. They arrived in Bethlehem in late spring, at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Ruth 1:22 NLT