



TEXT SUMMARY

In our text, [Ruth 1:1-5](#), we meet two of the main characters in the narrative: Naomi, a widowed Jewish woman living in Moab who has also lost her two sons; and Ruth, her widowed Moabite daughter in law. We see Naomi dealing not only with the loss of her husband but also of her two sons, and Ruth loses her husband.

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

1. The Book of Ruth opens with a familiar scenario: God's people leaving the Land during a famine to seek help. Where else have we seen that chain of events?
2. The opening words of Book of Ruth tell us that the story takes place "in the days when the judges ruled." From your knowledge of the Book of Judges, how would you characterize the moral and spiritual atmosphere in and among God's holy people?

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

A main storyline in the Book of Ruth is the transformation of Naomi's attitude toward God. Her situation could not have been more fraught: a Jewish widow in a foreign land without a husband or sons to provide for and protect her. In our study of Hebrews, we thought about the terrifying slide from discouragement to hardening of the heart to unbelief, a very real possibility for someone in Naomi's situation.

Use your imagination to enter her interior world.

1. What are some of the traumatic events she has endured and witnessed? We are never given access to her interior life, but like Job, she surely must have had questions about God.
2. What would she have been tempted to think about the power, goodness, and wisdom of Israel's God?

- ...in the way that you expected?
- ...in some way you *didn't* expect?
- ...at a *time* that you didn't expect?

[illegible]