

# Week One: Discussion Questions

## *UNEXPECTED LEGACY: FINDING THE EXTRAORDINARY IN THE ORDINARY*



### 1. INTRODUCTIONS AND QUESTIONS TO PREPARE YOUR HEART:

- a. Please share your name with the group along with something that not a lot of people know about you.
- b. Please describe some traits about a woman that you deeply respect (please don't share her name).
- c. How much of what you shared about this woman has to do with her physical appearance, and why?
- d. How do anger and bitterness affect a person's behavior and relationships?
- e. When you see situations line up that seem to be a coincidence, what does that bring to mind about the Lord?

### 2. SCHEDULE:

- a. Please look over the schedule in the front of your notebook. Are there any questions about the schedule?
- b. We'd like to honor your time, so we'll try to stick as closely to the schedule as possible. In order to help with that, Jonna (or someone) will text your leader with a 3-5-minute warning before you need to close in prayer.
- c. If at all possible, please come a few minutes early so that you can enjoy the time in your groups to the fullest extent.

### 3. HOMEWORK:

- a. Please start each homework day with prayer in order to invite the Lord to be part of your study time. (It's not just about knowing more, but deepening your relationship with the Lord.)
- b. We will have 5 days of homework. Please try to do the homework each day rather than trying to get it in all at once so that you can get the most out of your study time. Please try and let the "catch up" plan be the exception and not the rule. (But even if you don't get it all finished, you're still totally welcome here. Please come anyway.)
- c. Homework questions with asterisks (\*) will be the discussion questions for the coming week.

### 4. PLEASE CLOSE THIS TIME IN PRAYER.

- a. Please ask the Lord to prepare your heart for the message you're about to hear.
- b. Please ask the Lord to help you to open your heart and mind to what He wants to teach you over the next several weeks.



## LEGACY OF TRIALS, EXTRAORDINARY RESPONSE

### RUTH CHAPTER 1



III. Naomi \_\_\_\_\_ trials: Recognize the temptation to keep our eyes on our \_\_\_\_\_ rather than the Lord when life is hard. (Ruth 1:6-13)

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IV. Ruth \_\_\_\_\_ to trials: Recognize that the only way to walk victoriously in hard circumstances is to \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord. (Ruth 1:14-22)

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# Week One: Homework

## LEGACY OF TRIALS, EXTRAORDINARY RESPONSE RUTH CHAPTER 1

### DAY ONE

**PRAY:** Give your study time to the Lord, asking Him to give you eyes to see Him in new ways as you study Ruth 1 this week.

**MEMORIZE:** This week we will be memorizing Proverbs 31:25. Say the verse out loud a few times now, and then write it on a notecard and put the card where you can review it throughout each day this week.

*“Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come.” Proverbs 31:25*

**STUDY:** The book of Ruth takes place during the time when judges ruled the land of Israel. After Joshua led the people into the promised land, the book of Judges tells us that a new generation of Israelites grew up who did not know the Lord or what he had done for Israel (Judges 2:10). They began to do evil in the eyes of the Lord and followed other gods, so the Lord handed them over to raiders who plundered them (Judges 2:12-15). The people would call out to the Lord in their distress, and the Lord would raise up judges to save them out of the hands of these raiders (Judges 2:16). After the Lord would save them, they would forget the Lord and then go back to doing even more evil than they had done before (Judges 2:19). This was the cycle in the land of Israel during the timeframe of Ruth. Today we will get a bird’s eye view of Ruth chapter 1. Begin by reading Ruth 1 and then answer the following questions.

1. What are the circumstances of the opening of the book of Ruth? Many scholars believe that this story may have taken place around the time of Judges 6. Read Judges 6:1-5 and see what added insight this passage gives you into the background of the book.

2. Summarize the content of each paragraph of this chapter. Give each paragraph a short title to help you remember the content.

a. Vs 1-5

b. Vs 6-13

c. Vs 14-18

d. Vs 19-22

3. What do you think the author intended to say to his first readers through this chapter?

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4. What do we learn about man's nature in this chapter?

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5. \*What do we learn about God's character in this chapter?

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6. \*Are there any questions you have as you read through this chapter? Record them on the lines.

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*Close your study time today in prayer, thanking the Lord for one truth that impacted you today as you studied Ruth 1.*

## DAY TWO

**PRAY:** Ask the Lord to give you ears to hear his voice today as you study.

**MEMORIZE:** Repeat our memory verse for the week out loud a few times. How would a person clothe themselves in strength and dignity?

**STUDY:** When we face trials of different kinds, we are often tempted to run from what is hard. This is right where we find Elimelech in Ruth 1:1-5. Begin by reading Ruth 1:1-5. As you read, be thinking about your own responses to trials.

1. Look at verse 1. Why did Elimelech's family leave the land of Israel and what were their intentions when they set out for Moab?

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2. Read Deuteronomy 23:3-6. What does this tell you about the country of Moab? What conclusions can you draw about Elimelech's choice to leave the land of Israel?

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3. What were the results of Elimelech's choice in verses 3-5?

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4. \*What applications can you draw from the experiences of Elimelech and his family in these verses?

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5. Are you ever tempted to simply flee trials? If so, why?

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6. \*What can you do to intentionally run to God when facing trials?

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*Close in prayer as you thank the Lord for his power and help to turn to him in the midst of difficulties.*

### DAY THREE

**PRAY:** Ask the Lord to open your eyes to the hope that you have in Him as you study today.

**MEMORIZE:** Repeat your memory verse out loud a few times, saying it slowly and emphasizing different words each time.

**STUDY:** When we face difficulties, one thing that will become evident is where we place our hope: is our hope in the Lord or is it in something or someone else? Hopelessness can be an indication that we are relying on something or someone that has failed us, something other than the Lord. As you study today be thinking about where Naomi is placing her hope and what Naomi's response would look like if her hope was in the Lord. Begin your study time by reading Ruth 1:6-13.

1. What motivated Naomi to return to Bethlehem?

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2. What is revealed about Ruth and Orpah in their willingness to accompany Naomi to her homeland?

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3. \*What do we learn about Naomi from the blessing she speaks over her daughter-in-laws in verses 8-9?

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4. \*What do we learn about Naomi's character from Ruth and Orpah's reluctance to leave her?

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5. Read Deuteronomy 25:5-10. With this law as a backdrop, summarize what Naomi is saying to Ruth and Orpah in verses 11-13.

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6. What do we learn about Naomi's view of God from this passage?

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*Close in prayer by praying Lamentations 3:22-24 back to the Lord. Tell him some of the reasons why you can put your hope in him no matter what your circumstances are.*

*Lamentations 3:22-24: "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."."*

## DAY FOUR

**PRAY:** Ask the Lord to reveal any ways in which you need to choose Him today in your words, actions, and thoughts as you study Ruth 1.

**MEMORIZE:** Write our verse for the week on the lines below. If there is any part that trips you up, review it out loud as needed.

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**STUDY:** Our choices have consequences. Though the Bible says nothing negative about Orpah's obedience to Naomi's wishes, her choice puts her in contrast to Ruth. As you study today, be thinking about the contrast between Orpah's choice to return home and Ruth's choice to follow Naomi. Begin by reading Ruth 1:14-18.

1. The Hebrew word order places emphasis on the action of the two women in verse 14. Note the contrast: Orpah \_\_\_\_\_ but Ruth \_\_\_\_\_.

2. What were the physical implications of Orpah's choice? How did this contrast with Ruth's choice?

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3. \*What were the spiritual implications of Orpah's choice? How did this contrast with Ruth's choice?

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4. The Hebrew word translated “clung” in verse 14 is “dabaq”. Read the definition of “dabaq” below. How does this add to your understanding of Ruth’s commitment to Naomi?

*dabaq: to stick to, to adhere to, to be glued to, to be loyal, devoted, close personal involvement; also used in Genesis 2:24 to describe a husband leaving his father and mother and cleaving to his wife.*

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5. \*What are some aspects of Ruth’s character that you admire from this passage?

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6. Why do you think Ruth’s choice was so pleasing to the Lord?

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*Close in prayer, asking the Lord to help you make choices, big and small, that will honor and please him just as Ruth did.*

## DAY FIVE

**PRAY:** Romans 5:3-5 says, “Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” Begin your study time today by asking God to give you fresh joy and perspective in the midst of your circumstances as you study Ruth 1.

**MEMORIZE:** Quote your memory verse for the week out loud. How does this verse relate to what you are learning in the book of Ruth?

**STUDY:** Our view of God in the midst of suffering is key to the way that we respond to our circumstances. Seeing God’s sovereign hand of mercy, grace, and love can help us walk through suffering with strength, hope, and purpose. As you study today, think about your own view of God in the midst of the hard circumstances that you have faced or are facing. What truths about God’s character do you need to more firmly grasp in order to have a Romans 5:3-5 view of suffering? Begin by reading Ruth 1:19-22.

1. Although not directly stated in the text, what would the first readers have understood about the women’s journey from Moab to Bethlehem? See Ezra 8:22, 31 and Luke 10:30 for added insight. What does this reveal about God’s activity in the lives of these women?

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2. What is at the root of Naomi's request for a name change? What does this reveal about her view of God?

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3. How does Naomi contrast her former state with her current one in verse 21? What is ironic about her statement?

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4. \*Read Romans 5:3-5 again. How could this perspective of suffering have changed Naomi's response to her struggles?

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5. \*Can you relate to Naomi's response to her suffering and her view of God? Why or why not?

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6. How does the final verse of the chapter prepare us for the events to follow?

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*Close in prayer as you thank God for who He is and the ways that He has worked in your life in the midst of hardship. Ask Him to help you to have a Romans 5:3-5 view of suffering.*