

Ruth

Lesson #3 – Chapter 1

Read through Chapter 1 before beginning this lesson.

1. When does the story of Ruth take place (vs. 1)?
2. To gain insight into the time period in which Ruth takes place, read Judges chapter 2 and 21:25. What do you learn about the nation of Israel at that time?
3. Why did the man leave Bethlehem to go to Moab (vs. 1)? Who did he take with him (vss. 1-2)?
4. What do you learn about the Ephrathites from Gen. 35:16, 19; 48:7; and 1 Sam. 17:12?
5. When a famine occurred in the land of Israel what things can you surmise? See Deut. 28:45-48 and 29:22-28 to formulate your answer. How does that support what you learned about the spiritual state of the people from question #2?
6. What interesting facts do you know about Moab? For starters see Gen. 19:36-37; Deut. 34:5; Josh. 13:32. A Bible dictionary/encyclopedia, a commentary on Ruth, or your Study Bible notes would also be a good place to look.
7. What happened to the family after arriving in Moab (vss. 3-5)? How long were they in Moab (vs. 4)?
8. Elimelech tried to escape from the lessons God intended to teach him. Remember, God sent the famine for a purpose. What lessons might Elimelech have learned had he stayed in Israel?

9. We all have been tempted to flee from the life lessons God wants to teach us. Why is it important to submit to God and learn the lessons He means to teach us?
10. Why did Naomi leave Moab and return to Israel (vs. 6)? What does this change in Israel tell you about the possible spiritual state of the nation by then?
11. What were Naomi's daughters-in-law willing to do (vss. 7, 10)? What was Naomi's response to them (vss. 8-9, 11-13)?
12. What can you observe about the relationship Naomi and her daughters-in-law shared?
13. How did these women react to her plea that they stay in Moab (vss. 14-15)?
14. What commitment does Ruth make to Naomi in vss. 16-18?
15. How does the village of Bethlehem react to Naomi's homecoming (vs. 19)?
16. How does Naomi recount the events in her life in vss. 20-21?
17. Job's wife in Job 2:7-10 is another woman who underwent some severe trials. How were Naomi and Job's wife's responses similar and different from each other?
18. What is the core problem of Naomi and Job's wife's responses to God and their life situation?
19. When are you tempted to view God in this way? What helps you to overcome thinking this way?

20. Naomi's eyes were set on the past instead of the future God was unfolding for her. What did Naomi know about God that had been taught to her since childhood that should have given her comfort? See Ex. 15:2-3, 11-13; Deut. 10:12-21; 32:39.
21. We have the added benefit of God's completed revelation to aid us when trouble comes upon us and we need help thinking properly about our situation. How do the Scriptures assist us in thinking correctly about the trials in our lives? See Job 2:10; Ps. 119:67, 71, 75; 138:6-8; Lam. 3:19-33; Phil. 3:13-14; 4:8-9.
22. Verse 22 provides a little summary of Naomi's arrival in Bethlehem. Naomi's life looked very different upon her return to Bethlehem than it did when she left. Like Naomi, sometimes we have trouble reconciling with the changes in our lives when they no longer match up to the pictures we have in our heads of what life is supposed to look like. What are some steps you could take to begin the process of being thankful for the "new" life God has given you if you find yourself in a situation like this?
23. Who is the main character in Ch. 1? How would you describe that person from the details in this chapter?
24. What picture of God is presented in this chapter?
25. What lessons of encouragement or caution have you gleaned from this chapter?