

Discussion Questions for the book of Ruth

(for personal or group study)

The theologian and philosopher Francis Schaeffer said that all reality is made up of four aspects: God, people, place, and me.

Turning those four aspects into four story questions is a VERY productive way to do Bible study:

- What does this passage tell us about God?
- What does this passage tell us about people?
- What does this passage tell us about circumstances?
- What does this passage tell us about me?

What does this passage tell me about God?

Growing up in a secular culture we do not often see God (who He is and what He does) as a part of our reality. We live our lives by the wrong narrative – a narrative without God.

Likewise when we approach our Bible reading, we focus on human beings as the center of the story and think of God more as part of the setting. But the only way we can mine the richness of the Bible is to hear what the passage says about God before we hear what it says for us (personal application).

What does the book of Ruth tell us about God? We find the following comments about God:

- 1:2 “God is King” – the meaning of the name “Elimelech.”
- 1:6 Yahweh came to the aid of His people.
- 1:8 Will Yahweh show kindness?
- 1:9 Will Yahweh grant another husband?
- 1:13 “Yahweh’s hand has gone out against me.”
- 1:16 “your God, my God”
- 1:17 “may Yahweh deal with me”
- 1:20 “the Almighty has made my life bitter.”
- 1:21 “Yahweh has brought me back empty...Yahweh has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.”
- 2:1 “In him is strength” – the meaning of the name “Boaz.”
- 2:4 “Yahweh be with you! Yahweh bless you!”
- 2:12 “May Yahweh repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by Yahweh, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.”
- 2:20 **[This is the exact middle of the book.]** “Yahweh bless him!” “He has not stopped showing His kindness to the living and the dead.”
- 3:10 “Yahweh bless you.”
- 3:13 “as surely as Yahweh lives...”
- 4:11 “May Yahweh make the woman like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel.”
- 4:12 “Through the offspring (the seed) Yahweh gives you.”
- 4:13 “Yahweh enabled Ruth to conceive.”
- 4:14 “Praise be to Yahweh, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer.”

What do you learn about God from these statements? List what you learn.

What does this book tell us about people?

What do you learn about human beings from this book – both good and bad?

What does this book tell us about circumstances?

- It is during the time of the judges. There is famine – why?
- Much of the location centers on Bethlehem. Why Bethlehem?
- What do you learn about God and the circumstances of life?

What does this book tell us about me?

If we use Naomi as the main example of a believer, what does this book tell you about yourself? What can a believer feel?

What can a believer begin to believe? What traps can a believer easily fall into?

What should you believe? What should you do in the midst of similar circumstances?

One final question: In Luke 24:27 Jesus said that He could be found in every passage of the Old Testament. So where in this book do you see Christ either present, predicted, prefigured, or providing?

