

Discussion Guide Part 2

April 15, 2018

A Family Tragedy



1. Read Ruth 1:1-5

2. As we think of Naomi after the loss of her husband and sons, one of the things that may intensify her loss was to remember that she was an Israelite, a daughter of Jehovah, a descendent of Abraham, and an heir of God's promises. Are Christians, children of God, the redeemed people of God entitled to a life devoid of suffering? Why or why not? _____

3. Another fact that may have intensified Naomi's loss was the fact that she was a woman. She also lived in a culture where barrenness and childlessness were viewed with judgment. What do you know about the stigma of barrenness in Bible times? _____

4. What do you know about refugees in today's world? How might that help us understand what Naomi went through in the famine and living as a refugee? _____

5. How have your own struggles and losses shaped your view of God?
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6. God’s “sovereignty” means that He is absolute in authority and unrestricted in His supremacy. Everything that happens is, at the very least, the result of God’s permissive will. This holds true even if certain specific things are not what He would prefer. Does this truth encourage you or give you fear? Why or why not?
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7. Pastor Jim painted the picture, that in our suffering, God is before, above, in, and under us. The Bible calls Him the God of All Comfort. What practical ways has God comforted you in your grief?
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8. Philip Yancy once said about suffering: the question isn’t where is God in our suffering, but where is the Church? How can the church care for those who grieve? Are there people you are aware of that might need this response from the Church? _____
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9. Read Psalm 147. This is a congregational song that connects God’s control and care of the universe with His control and care for them, the nation of Israel. The wounded and broken among the nation are the exiles. The wounds are God’s discipline. We are reminded

that he gathers and heals his grief-stricken children. There is an old hymn 'Come Ye Disconsolate'¹² and the first verse reads:

*Come ye disconsolate
Where'er ye languish
Come to the mercy seat
Fervently kneel
Here bring your wounded hearts
Here tell your anguish
Earth has no sorrow
That heav'n cannot heal*

This is a loving invitation to bring you hurts and your pain to the mercy seat

¹ Dejected, sad, etc.

² Samuel Webbe Sr. | Thomas Hastings | Thomas Moore, Public Domain