

# Reading Ruth through a Set of Different Lenses.

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## Text: Ruth 1-4, Numbers 25, Deuteronomy 23:3-6

This week, I am going to read Ruth 1 to you making some comments about the people and the story line, through these lenses, as we go. Then we'll have some time to discuss our thoughts on this reading of the book and the history. I think you will find it helpful to read the four chapters. I think you might also find it helpful to look at the different names for God used at different parts of Chapter 1 and think about why each of them was used at that point in the story.

## Lenses

### 1. Culture:

- a. The barley harvest - Passover
- b. The time of the Judges – Theocracy of Israel
- c. Relationship to Moab - Deuteronomy 23:3-6 (The reason; Numbers 25)
- d. The names parents give their children is indicative of their hopes or place on their spiritual journey.

### 2. Names

- a. Bethlehem – house of bread
- b. Elimelech – My God is King
- c. Naomi - My pleasant one...Mara – Bitterness
- d. Mahlon – to be weak or sick
- e. Kilion – to be frail
- f. Ruth - Friendship
- g. Orpah - to turn one's back
- h. The Lord: (Ruth 1:6,8,9,17,21,/2:4,12,20,/3: 10, 13/4:11,12,13,14 ) YAHWEH – The personal aspect of God; God who is in covenant relationship.
- i. The Sovereign One or Lord God Almighty (Ruth 1:20) El Shaddai – The aspect of God who has promised descendants to those who follow Heaven's ways.
- j. God (Ruth 1:16/ 2:12) Majesty; plural in form but singular in meaning with a focus on great power.

### 3. Literary devices

- a. Irony
- b. Chiasm?
- c. Story Arcs

4. **Stages of Spiritual Development** – for each of the characters?  
I attached Kohlberg

## Questions

1. Why do you think Ruth's descendants were not subject to the Deuteronomic prohibitions about Moab?
2. What do you think this says about God?
3. What do you think it says about Ruth?
4. Do you think Naomi ever changed her views on God? What are the indicators?
5. Do you think Ruth is an object lesson? If so, of what?
6. Why do you think this book was written?
7. What's your favorite part.?