

NAOMI'S RETURN

CENTRAL TRUTH

When we examine this season of Naomi's life, and then begin to examine our own, there's a lot we can learn. We discover that grief and hope can co-exist, that community is essential to our walk, and most importantly, that **the Lord is sovereign, and we are called to trust Him.**

KEY QUESTION

- ↓ **What is Naomi's perception of her circumstances? How does this mirror the way we tend to respond to hard seasons?**

Naomi's assumption is that the Lord's hand is against her (v. 14), and that the Lord has dealt very bitterly with her. Though Naomi was going through a painful and bitter season, it was not punishment for her actions. We know from Scripture that God does administer discipline to those He loves (see Hebrews 12), but that He does not cause pain for no reason. Most of the hardship we see is the result of being a part of a fallen, groaning world and the sin that exists within it. We mustn't conclude that the Lord is against us, and we must continue trusting God.

KEEP IN MIND

- ▮ The students in your group may be going through a variety of difficult situations. As a leader, you have the opportunity to be present and provide a listening ear. Using the **Culture Note** in this session, you can also help students to understand what it means to grieve in a God-honoring way.
- ▮ In this session, we're told that Ruth and Naomi experienced the death of loved ones. You may want to be particularly sensitive if students in your group have experienced the loss of a loved one recently. Pray for them before you arrive to small group.

APPLICATION

- ▮ **How does our example to a lost world look different when we trust God like Ruth?**

THE WIN

FOR THE STUDENT: Life can be difficult. But, no matter what we face, we can trust the Lord because He is good and sovereign over all things.

FOR THE LEADER: Students need to be reminded that the Lord is not oblivious to their hurt. He is a present and kind God who is worthy of our trust because of who He is.

7 ARROWS

- ↻ What does this passage say?
- ↑ What does this passage tell us about God?
- ← What did this passage mean to its original audience?
- ↔ How does this passage change the way I relate to people?
- ↓ What does this passage tell us about the human heart?
- ↺ How does this passage prompt me to pray?
- What does this passage demand of me?