



Worthy of imitation. This is the posture we assume when we approach the women of faith whose stories we read about in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). Contained within this wonderful collection of books are the stories of women who passed on the faith from one generation to the next, who stood up for justice, and who had a deep, abiding relationship with God. These women are pillars to the foundation of our own faith, and in this series, we explore their stories.

### Questions for Reflection:

- What can we learn about God through the story of Ruth and Naomi?
- How did God work in the midst of tragedy in Naomi and Ruth's lives? How have you experienced God working in the shadows in your life?
- Tamar, Ruth, Rahab, Bathsheba appear in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1. What does their inclusion here say about Christ's lineage and the good news of the gospel message? Why do you think God choose Boaz and Ruth for the line of King David and Christ Jesus?
- Who are the strong women in your life who have stood up for themselves and/or others and have taught you to do the same?

Adapted from Preaching the Women of the Old Testament: Who They Were and Why They Matter by Lynn Japinga

### Spiritual Practice: Bible Study

Throughout the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, we find encouragement to regularly study, meditate on, contemplate, and memorize God's word. In Bible study, we come to know what the Bible says and discover how it intersects and applies to our lives today. Adele Calhoun writes in her book *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, "Studying the Scripture can equip, guide and reveal how to live in life-giving ways that deepen our friendship with God and others." Try the following suggestions as we explore the Women of the Hebrew Bible during worship:

1. Look for a theme as you read:
  - a. Read a chapter of the Bible and give it a title.
  - b. In your own words write what the chapter is about.
2. Read a passage of Scripture and ask yourself three questions as you read:
  - a. What speaks to my heart? Draw a heart beside those words.
  - b. What new thought or idea comes to me? Draw a light bulb next to those words.
  - c. What does Scripture move me to do? Draw a hand beside the action you are feeling led to take.
3. Choose one or two questions and record your responses in a journal:
  - a. What stirs, touches, or inspires you as you read this passage?
  - b. What stands out for you in these passages? What "speaks" to you?
  - c. What reassurances, words of comfort, or hope do you find in this message?
  - d. What does this passage say about God? What does this passage say about us?
  - e. What does this passage say about the relationship between God and human beings?
  - f. What does God want us to learn from this passage? What stirs you as you read this passage?
  - g. How can we use this lesson in our daily lives? What practical steps will you take?
4. Use art supplies to illuminate your understanding of scripture. Read a passage of scripture then use art supplies to create a picture of what this passage reveals to you about your faith journey, God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit.
  - a. How do you see yourself in this picture?
  - b. What thoughts and feelings does this reflection stir in your heart?
5. These Spiritual Practices 101 videos provide suggestions on other ways to explore scripture:
  - a. SOAP Bible Study Method – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5882XKvzM4>
  - b. Lectio Divina - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7A8mzw21AI>
6. Amplify Media and The Bible Year are other resources available to you to support you as you explore the Bible.

