

Ruth and Boaz



Scripture Reference: [Ruth 2-4](#)

Suggested Theme: God always loves us and never leaves us. He shows us love even when our family and home situations change.

Memory Verse: “Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray, always give thanks.” [Philippians 4:6, ICB](#)

Story Overview:

Boaz was the owner of the field where Ruth gathered grain. He was also a relative of Naomi’s late husband. When Boaz took notice of Ruth and treated her with kindness, Naomi knew that he would be a good husband to Ruth. She instructed Ruth to follow the wise custom of lying at the foot of Boaz’s bed to show that she wished to marry him. Boaz also followed tradition by gaining the permission of another relative of Naomi’s that had the right to marry Ruth. Boaz and Ruth married and when they had a son, Naomi took care of him like her own grandchild.

Background Study:

[Refer to the information about the time of the judges.](#) Ruth went to work in the barley fields to support her mother-in-law, Naomi. It was the custom of the day for poor people to “glean the fields”, that is, to pick up any grain left behind by the harvesters. While Ruth was gathering the leftover grain, she came to the attention of Boaz, the owner of the field.

The name, Boaz, probably referred to quickness or strength. He was a man of great wealth. But besides referring to monetary strength, the Hebrew name probably meant that he was gifted in other ways. Boaz was generous to Ruth in offering grain and water, for he had heard about Ruth’s goodness to her mother-in-law.

Naomi recognised Boaz as a relative of hers. She could see that Boaz would be a good husband for Ruth. Naomi considered Ruth as her daughter. The law of God said that when a young woman became a widow, the man who was the nearest relative of her dead husband should marry the widow and buy back any land that belonged to her. In this way, God provided that the land would always be kept in the same family.

Naomi instructed Ruth on the customs of the day. After the harvest celebrations, all the workers slept near the grain so no one would steal it. Ruth waited until everyone was asleep and then lay down at Boaz’s feet. When he woke up at midnight, he found Ruth at his feet. In the culture of the time, Ruth was showing Boaz that she wanted to marry him.

Boaz was an older man and was flattered that Ruth had chosen him. First, he had to check with a nearer relative of Naomi, who had a greater legal right to marry Ruth.

Under Old Testament law, a near relative was allowed to buy back or redeem property that had belonged to family members. Boaz offered this option to the other relative first. One big thing in Boaz's favour was that he was wealthy. The other relative would have had to buy all of Naomi's property to be in a position to marry Ruth.

The relative gave up his right and let Boaz be the "kinsman redeemer." To show that this was legal, the relative followed custom, removed one of his sandals, and gave it to Boaz.

Acting as a kinsman-redeemer, Boaz acquired the property that had belonged to Elimelech and his two sons ([Ruth 4:9-10](#)). In addition, he acquired Ruth to be his wife.

The marriage was blessed with the birth of a son, Obed. Obed is a shortened form of Obadiah, meaning "servant of the Lord." The name was a fitting choice, for Obed grew up to become the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David.

Note: Also see the [Ruth and Naomi Story](#) on this site. Some of these resources relate to both stories.

Way to Introduce the Story:

Write the word "family" on the chalk/whiteboard. Let the children list the members of a family. The traditional two-parent and children will probably be mentioned, but don't be surprised by grandparents, uncles, solo parents, step-parents, or mum's partner. Children grow up in a wide range of family settings. They rarely have a choice in the situation. Children need to know that the Lord loves and takes care of his children. Whether children come from a non-traditional family or they know someone who does, they need to know that the Lord loves the members of that family and wants them to learn to love him. "Ruth knew what it was like to live in a family that was different. She was a widow and she lived with her mother-in-law. Let's find out how God loved and took care of Ruth."

The Story:

Ruth was not from Judah, where she had moved with Naomi. She was from Moab, where she worked very hard in the barley fields of Bethlehem. She gathered grain all day. The owner of the field was Boaz. Boaz was kind to Ruth and ensured all the workers treated her nicely.

Ruth brought all the grain home daily to Naomi, her mother-in-law. Ruth and Naomi would grind the grain into flour and then use it to make barley bread.

Naomi and Ruth were both widows. Naomi's husband had died many years before. Ruth used to be married to Naomi's son, but Naomi's son died. Now, Ruth treated Naomi like a mother, and Naomi treated Ruth like a daughter. Even though they had an unusual family, the Lord loved them and always cared for them.

One day, Naomi had a good idea. "Boaz has been so kind to you, Ruth. I think he would be a good husband. You do not know the customs of our people so I would be happy to tell you what to do if you would like me to."

Ruth did want to marry Boaz. He was older than she was, but he was a kind man. She wanted Naomi to help her.

Naomi told Ruth to go to the fields where all the barley was harvested. Boaz would be sleeping near the grain to guard it. Ruth was to quietly watch until she saw Boaz go to sleep for the night. After he was asleep, Ruth was to go and lie down at Boaz's feet.

“Don’t worry, Ruth,” said Naomi. “Among our people, that is a way for a woman to tell a man that she wants to marry him. Boaz will understand, and he will tell you what to do.

Ruth did just as Naomi told her. That night, when Boaz was asleep, she lay down near his feet. At midnight, something woke Boaz up from his sleep. He looked down and saw Ruth. Boaz was very happy that Ruth wanted to marry him.

“I would like to marry you, too, Ruth,” said Boaz. But first, we must follow the custom of my people. I am Naomi’s relative, so I can marry you. I will have to buy back all of the lands that Naomi’s husband used to own. There is one other relative who is closer to Naomi. If he buys back the land and marries you, he has the first choice. I must go to him and ask him. That is the law and custom of our people.”

The next day, Boaz went to the city gates to speak to the other relative. He said he wanted to buy back Naomi’s husband’s lands. This would mean that he would be called the “kinsman redeemer,” and it would cost a lot of money.

The other relative thought very carefully. He did not want to buy all of the land or marry Ruth, either. “Boaz, I will give up my right to be the ‘kinsman redeemer.’ I will follow our customs and give you my sandal. Then everyone will know that I am letting you be the ‘kinsman redeemer.’ You can buy Naomi’s lands, and you can marry Ruth.”

Boaz was very happy. He bought back all of Naomi’s lands and told her he would always care for her and Ruth. Boaz married Ruth.

Later, Ruth had a baby boy. She and Boaz called him Obed. Naomi loved Obed and helped take care of him. Now, Ruth and Naomi’s family was different. Now, there was a father, mother, baby, and grandmother. God still loved them and took care of them.

Many years later, after Obed grew up, he had a son named Jesse. Jesse later had a son named David, who grew up as the King of Israel. Many years later, one of Ruth and Boaz’s descendants was Jesus Christ.

Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible, but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection or other group participation.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Ruth \(part 2 above\) Click here to download these illustrations and slideshow.](#)

[Ruth \(part 3 above\) Click here to download these illustrations and slideshow.](#)

Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Review and Reflection Questions:

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story, while reflection questions encourage them to internalise its meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child’s spiritual development and help them connect to God. [Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.](#)

Review:

1. How did Ruth know Boaz? (Ruth worked in Boaz’s fields gleaning barley, and Boaz was Naomi’s relative)
2. Who did Ruth want to marry? (Boaz)

3. How did Boaz know that Ruth wanted to marry him? (She lay down at his feet during the night)
4. How did Naomi's relative show that he gave Boaz permission to marry Ruth? (He gave Boaz his sandal)
5. What was the name of Ruth and Boaz's son? (Obed)
6. How did God show Ruth and Naomi that He cared for them? (He helped Ruth marry Boaz so that they would have protection and have their needs taken care of)
7. Ruth stopped following her false gods and went to follow God. What do you think she learned about God from this experience?
8. What did you learn about God from this story?

Reflection:

1. What is something you wonder about in this story?
2. What part of this story was most interesting to you?
3. Why do you think Ruth and Naomi thought Boaz would be a good man for Ruth to marry?
4. How do you think Ruth felt when she married Boaz and had a baby? How do you think Naomi felt when this happened?
5. Ruth and Naomi both had husbands who died, which was very sad. Later, God gave Ruth a new husband and a son, and this was a very good thing. Do you think having a new kind of family made Ruth and Naomi happy, sad, or both?
6. Have you ever had a new person join your family? How did you feel when that happened?
7. Sometimes, our families change, or things at home change. Has something big ever changed in your home or family?
8. God loves us no matter what our homes or families are like. How does God show you He loves you?
9. Sometimes, we can worry about our families or be upset with them. What can we do when we feel this way? (The children may suggest many answers. Encourage them to remember they can also talk to God and ask for his help and to take care of their family members. Try praying after the discussion if you would like).

Prayer:

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a life-long friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. [A variety of prayer methods are found here.](#)

Song Suggestions:

- [God is Listening When We Pray \(Song\) English/Cebuano](#)
- [My God is So Big Song](#)
- [Books of the Old Testament Song](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

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Activities and Crafts:

- [How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.](#)

- [Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.](#)

Activities:

- Use a bible encyclopedia to learn more about Jewish wedding customs.
- Study and draw Boaz and Ruth's family trees ([Matthew 1:1-17](#), especially [verses 5-6](#)).
- Play a simple word game. [Bible Wordz Game](#) is an adaptable game in which children form words from letter tiles. The words relate to those in the Bible lesson.

Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable "God's Story" printable reflection page. [Free printables for this story.](#)

Crafts:

- Let each child draw or paint a picture of their own family. Families come in all shapes and sizes. Remember that, even in the most complicated home situations, God loves each of these children and wants the best for them. Here is your chance to greatly influence love, understanding, and acceptance. A child has no control over the adults in their home. Let God's love shine through you!
- Create a miniature model of the story of Ruth. This scene could be placed inside a box, such as a shoebox, that is turned on its side. You and the children could add items that relate to the story. There are two different lessons on this website concerning Ruth. If taught in sequence, items could be added to the model as you cover the story.
 - [Ruth and Naomi](#): These might include figures of Naomi's family, Ruth, grain, travel items or a bible map showing Bethlehem and Moab.
 - [Ruth and Boaz](#): Add a blanket, wedding items and a baby doll.

Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. [Free printables for this story.](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets- Boaz redeems Ruth \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Craft: Decorate sandals/jandals/flip-flops/thongs \(How stuff works\)](#)
- [Craft: Printable pattern for paper sandal \(Sunday school crafts\)](#)
- [Other: Visual aid for telling the story of Ruth. \(Bible for children\)](#)
- [Other: A number of story and craft ideas \(DLTK\)](#)

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