



8

God Blesses Ruth

Key Theme

- God blesses faithfulness.

Key Passages

- Ruth 1:16, 2:11–12, 4:13, 4:16–17; Matthew 1:1; John 3:16

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Compare Boaz's kindness toward Ruth with Jesus's kindness toward sinners.
- Identify Ruth's relationship to Jesus.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

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Students will practice the memory verse using the Memory Verse Cards.



Activity 1: People in the Book of Ruth

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Students will color a character from the book of Ruth. They will use the characters later during the lesson.



Studying God's Word

page 6

When Naomi's husband and sons died in the land of Moab she returned to her home in Bethlehem. Her daughter-in-law, Ruth, proved her loyalty to Naomi and to the God of Israel by insisting on staying with Naomi. God rewarded Ruth's faithfulness by providing a kinsman-redeemer—Boaz—to provide for her. Boaz's redemption of Ruth reminds us of the compassion of another Redeemer—Jesus.



Activity 2: Retelling Ruth

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Students will use their characters as you retell the account of Ruth from today's lesson.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print and cut out one set of the Memory Verse Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Print on cardstock if possible. (You will begin studying a new memory verse this week.)
- Put complete sets into envelopes or small plastic bags.
- You may want to encourage this to be a team activity.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Cards in envelopes or small plastic bags



PEOPLE IN THE BOOK OF RUTH

- Print at least one character for each student from the People in Ruth Characters on the Resource DVD-ROM.

- At least one printed character for each student
- Crayons



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print the Lesson Board Work Outline for your use during the lesson.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Lesson Board Work Outline
- People in Ruth Characters that were colored and discussed earlier



RETELLING RUTH

- Print one Retelling Ruth Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use during this activity.

- Retelling Ruth Sheet
- People in Ruth Characters from Activity 1



Memory Verse

1 Samuel 16:7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

➤ **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Before you begin to prepare for your lesson this week, please prepare your heart and mind by reading the book of Ruth. It is a beautiful story of loving loyalty, integrity, courage, and redemption.

During the time of the judges (Ruth 1:1), Naomi and Elimelech, natives of Bethlehem in Judah, with their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, moved to the country of Moab to avoid a famine. Elimelech died in the land of Moab, and afterward the two sons married Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah. After about ten years, the two sons died, leaving Naomi alone with her daughters-in-law.

In that time and culture, life was very difficult for a widow. Naomi told Ruth and Orpah to return to their own people as Naomi intended to return to hers. She explained that she was too old to have more sons, and even if she did, it would take too long for the sons to grow up to be the husbands of her daughters-in-law. Both daughters-in-law protested. Orpah finally did return to her people. Ruth, in contrast, adamantly refused, declaring determined allegiance, not only to Naomi but also to her people and to her God (Ruth 1:16–17). This is to be understood as more than personal loyalty and love to Naomi. Rather, Ruth declared her intent to forsake her family and the false religion of the Moabites and to attach herself to the covenant people of the true God. In that culture, Ruth took a radical and courageous step. Certainly she must have loved Naomi, but this kind of commitment to Israel and to God, regardless of the lack of familial connections in Israel, was a nearly certain path to poverty. Naomi may have been beloved by Ruth, but she was not in a position to do anything for her material needs. Ruth's courage is much to be admired.

When Ruth and Naomi returned to make their home in Bethlehem, they were in the position of little more than beggars. This was evidenced in the manner Ruth obtained food for them, following harvesting field workers and picking up ("gleaning") what little they dropped as they harvested. It was customary (and commanded in Leviticus 23:22) to allow the poor to gather food this way. The owner of the field, Boaz, compassionately instructed his young men to leave more than usual for Ruth, and Boaz recognized and admired the path this young Moabite woman had followed. His blessing to her makes it clear that she had not only been loyal to Naomi but had also entrusted herself to the Lord God of Israel: "A full reward be given you by

the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge" (Ruth 2:12).

Boaz was a close relative of Naomi's, one who could be expected to take responsibility for the care of Ruth and Naomi. In chapter 3, after being instructed by Naomi, Ruth came to Boaz by night at the threshing floor in a manner intended to show that she wished to be under his care; and Boaz responded favorably, impressed with Ruth's virtue and her kindness in not pursuing younger men. Boaz was apparently much older than Ruth (Ruth 3:10–11).

The story culminates in chapter 4 when Boaz confronted another, closer relative of Naomi's with the opportunity he had to "redeem"—to buy back into the close family—the land that had belonged to Naomi's husband. The redemption of the land included, by custom in Israel, the responsibility to care for the widow of Elimelech (Naomi). The care also included Ruth since she was part of the family and, because she was a young woman, involved marriage to her for the continuation of the family name (Ruth 4:5). Naomi's closer relative was unwilling to get involved, since it would affect the inheritance in his own family. Boaz was willing—and apparently a good deal more than willing—to marry Ruth. His redemption and marriage to Ruth led to her occupying a place in David's, and eventually Jesus's, ancestry as the great-grandmother of King David.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The redemption of Ruth by Boaz is a touching story of commitment and compassion, but it is much more than that. As Ruth's close relative ("kinsman-redeemer" in the NIV), Boaz is certainly a type of Christ, our Redeemer. While it was costly for Boaz to redeem Ruth, Jesus Christ paid so much more for His bride. He set aside the privileges of His Godhood for our benefit (Philippians 2:5–11). For our sakes, He who was rich became poor (2 Corinthians 8:9). He who was without sin became sin for us so "that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Boaz went beyond the call of duty to show his love and concern for Ruth, and Jesus more so.

It is also significant in this account that Ruth was a Gentile (a non-Israelite). The picture of her being drawn into covenant in the nation of Israel recalls God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 17:4 that he

would be the father of many nations. It also foreshadows God's promise that His Messiah, Jesus, would be a "light to bring revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:32).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Merciful Lord, I praise you because you have compassion on sinners and have provided a way

for me to know you. Thank you for recording these events in the lives of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz. Ruth's faithfulness spurs me on to be more faithful to you. Boaz's compassion encourages me to look to Jesus, remember the compassion he had on me, and share that compassion with others in my life. Help me to share your truths with my students in an accurate, clear, and fun way. My heart yearns for them to know you, love you, and live for you alone. Draw them to you, Lord.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will put the Memory Verse Cards in order and recite the verse together and/or to each other. They may work individually or in teams. Refer to the Memory Verse Poster.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided a template on the Resource DVD-ROM you can use to make Memory Verse Cards to be put in order each week. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



People in the Book of Ruth

MATERIALS

- One character per student from the People in Ruth Characters
- Crayons

INSTRUCTIONS

Pass out at least one character to each student. Be sure to use all of the characters. Depending on the size of your class, some students may have more than one character. If you have more students than characters, make duplicate characters. Have the students color them. While they are coloring, walk around the classroom and help each student read the name and caption of each character. Explain to the students that as you mention people in the lesson, they will hold up their characters to represent the people in the book of Ruth.

Today we will meet lots of people in the account of Ruth in the Bible. I want you to color these characters now. Then, as we

study God's Word, I want you to hold your characters up when you hear about them. While you are coloring, I'm going to come around and help you read the name and caption on your character.

After the students have completed their sheets, say:

Let's go around the room and read the characters' names and the description of each of them.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

The characters we colored today were real people! We are about to hear what God's true Word says about these people who lived so long ago. There are some important things to hear and learn!





Studying God's Word

► Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

► Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.

Ruth 1:16

► Refer to the character coloring sheets as you go through the lesson. Remind the students to lift their characters in the air when they hear their name.

READ THE WORD

Today we will read about a woman named *Ruth* and how God blessed her faithfulness to Him. This account happened during the time of the judges that we talked about. Refer to the History of Israel Poster and Lesson 6 Lesson Theme Poster. Open your Bible to the book of *Ruth*. Recount the following background with enthusiasm.

I'll give you some background to this account of how God provided for His people. Don't forget to pay attention and hold up your characters when you hear their names! The people in Israel didn't have any food. There was a famine in the land. Because there wasn't any food, a man named *Elimelech* moved from Bethlehem in Israel to a place called Moab. He brought his wife, *Naomi*, and two sons, *Mahlon* and *Chilion*. While they were living in Moab, *Elimelech* died. Then each son married women from Moab. Their names were *Orpah* and *Ruth*. About 10 years later, the Bible says that *Naomi's* two sons *Mahlon* and *Chilion* died. Now she was left alone with her two daughters-in-law, *Orpah* and *Ruth*. These were the women *Naomi's* sons had married. But the men were gone now. Women who didn't have a husband or sons were often very poor and needed help. *Naomi* needed help. So she decided to go back to her home in Bethlehem. She heard that the famine was over, and now there was food in the land. Then *Naomi* told her daughters (the women who married her sons), *Orpah* and *Ruth*, to go back to Moab to their mothers' homes. *Orpah* did as *Naomi* said and went back to her home. But *Ruth* loved *Naomi* and did not want to leave her alone.

Listen as I read Ruth 1:16.

? Where did *Ruth* say she would go? *Wherever Naomi went.*

Ruth loved *Naomi*. She promised to stay with her until she died. *Ruth* also loved the true God—the same God *Naomi* worshipped. Continue telling the account with enthusiasm. The students should want to know what happened next!

Ruth showed that she trusted *Naomi's* God and was loyal to *Naomi* when she went with her back to Israel. *Ruth* believed God was faithful to care for His people. Her faith in God would bring blessings in her life. As for now, *Naomi* and *Ruth* were poor and hungry. They didn't have any way to make money. *Naomi* had a relative named *Boaz* in Bethlehem. *Naomi* sent *Ruth* to *Boaz's* field to pick up the grain that fell from the workers' bags. That was the only way they could eat—that's how poor people were able to get food in those days. *Ruth* worked very hard to get enough food for *Naomi* and herself. She was taking good care of *Naomi*. According to the Lord's plan, the man named *Boaz* noticed *Ruth* working in the field. He told his servants to leave more grain (or food) for *Ruth* and asked her to come

back to his field. *Ruth* wondered why *Boaz* would be so kind to her. She wasn't even from Israel, but from Moab. She was considered a foreigner.

Why was *Boaz* so kind to *Ruth*? We can find the answer in Ruth 2:11–12. Let's read that now! *Read the passage while the students follow along.*

Ruth 2:11–12

EXAMINE THE WORD

OK! Now let's really dig into this passage to see what it is saying to us.

Observe the Text

- ? What did Boaz know about Ruth? *Ruth 2:11. All she had done for her mother-in-law, how she left her family and country, and came to a place she did not know.*
- ? Good. Boaz noticed all that Ruth had been doing. He prayed a blessing on Ruth. Who was Boaz praying to? *Ruth 2:12. The Lord God of Israel.*

Yes, Boaz prayed to the Lord God of Israel to reward and protect *Ruth*.

Discover the Truth

This was wonderful! Do you see how God brought *Boaz* and *Ruth* together? God was in control of everything that was happening. God is sovereign over everything. *Boaz* noticed that *Ruth* loved her mother-in-law *Naomi*. And *Boaz* noticed that *Ruth* also loved God.

We will see that God would greatly bless *Ruth* and *Naomi* through *Boaz*.



READ THE WORD

Okay, back to the account. Keep listening! Get your characters ready. One night *Naomi* told *Ruth* to go to the threshing floor where all the grain was. *Boaz* was sleeping on the floor, and *Ruth* lay down at his feet. When *Boaz* woke up, he was surprised to see *Ruth*. She asked him to take care of her. *Ruth* also told *Boaz* she wanted to marry him. *Boaz* praised the Lord and called *Ruth* a good woman. He wanted to marry *Ruth*.

- ? What do you think happened next? *Allow for discussion.*

Let's see what God's Word says. Listen carefully. *Read Ruth 4:13.*

Ruth 4:13

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? What did Boaz do? *Ruth 4:13. Married Ruth. Write "Ruth and Boaz" on the board.*

Yes, Boaz and Ruth got married. And Ruth became pregnant and had a son. What a blessing! Many of Naomi's friends were very excited about the new son. And they all praised the Lord because Ruth had a son! Add "had a son" to the board.

- As you go through this next section, use the Lesson Board Work Outline to record the genealogy of Ruth and Boaz on the board so the students understand it better.

Ruth 4:16–17

Listen as I read the next two verses. *Read Ruth 4:16–17.*

- ? Was Naomi there to spend time with the baby boy? *Yes, she held him.*
That's right. Naomi was able to watch the baby and spend lots of time with him.
- ? The women in Bethlehem—Naomi's friends—named the baby. What did they name the baby? *Ruth 4:17. Add "Obed" to the genealogy.*

Discover the Truth

Obed was a very special baby boy—born into a very special family. You see, the Bible tells us that when Obed grew up, he had a son. *Add "Obed had a son" under his name.* His name was Jesse. *Add Jesse to the genealogy.* When Jesse grew up, he had a son. *Add "Jesse had a son" under his name.* Jesse's son's name was David. *Add "David" to the genealogy.*

- ? What do you remember about someone named David in the Bible? *Allow discussion.*

Matthew 1:1

It is King David from the Bible! *Add "King" before "David" to the board.* And King David was related to someone VERY special. I am going to read Matthew 1:1. Listen very carefully as I read. *Read verse.*

Did you hear that? Jesus Christ is called the Son of David. Jesus Christ was part of David's family. Jesus would come many, many years later—but this was Jesus's family. *Add "after many generations . . . Jesus was born!" to your board work.*

Ruth's great-grandson was King David who was in the line of Jesus Christ the Messiah! Ruth was faithful to the God of Israel, and God blessed her faithfulness in a very special way!

Boaz was a very kind man. He helped Naomi and Ruth. He married Ruth, and they eventually became the great-grandparents of King David—and that same family would one day lead to Jesus Christ, who is the redeemer of all sinners.



READ THE WORD

John 3:16

Speaking of Jesus, the Redeemer, we have another verse to read. Can you find John 3:16 in your Bibles? *Help the students find John 3:16. If appropriate, choose someone to read the passage. Otherwise, read it yourself.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Who is the first person mentioned in this verse? *God.*
- ? What does this verse say that God loved? *The world.*

? Who did God send into the world because He loved the world so much?
His Son, Jesus.

? Why did God send His Son Jesus to die for sinners? *So whoever believes in Him can have everlasting life.*

? Yes. Sin separates us from God. But on the Cross, Jesus, who never sinned, took the punishment for the sins of everyone who would believe in Him. And why did He do that? What will God give to people who believe in Him and Jesus? It is in this verse. *Re-read John 3:16. Everlasting life.*

Discover the Truth

This is an amazing truth. We know that sin separates us from God. God hates sin and we all sin. But Jesus Christ came to redeem us—to give us everlasting life. This verse tells us that God sent His only Son, Jesus. Jesus died on the Cross. And whoever believes in Him, turns from their sins and trusts Him, will have everlasting life.

When Boaz saved Ruth and Naomi by showing mercy and compassion to them, it was a picture of what Jesus would do for sinners one day. Boaz showed kindness to Ruth and Naomi and saved them from their hopeless situation. Jesus showed kindness by dying on the Cross. And if we turn to Him He will redeem us from our hopeless situation and one day give us everlasting life with Him!



Retelling Ruth

MATERIALS

- People in Ruth Characters from Activity 1
- Retelling Ruth Sheet

INSTRUCTIONS

Review the Retelling Ruth Sheet before class so you are familiar with the prompts. Have students bring the appropriate characters to the front of the classroom to re-enact the account of Ruth as you retell it from the Retelling Ruth Sheet. Encourage the students to “act” with their characters as you read the statements.

Students can switch characters so everyone gets an opportunity to act. If the students have difficulty, give them direction on how to act out the scene appropriately.

OK. Now come up here with your characters. I’m going to give the account of Ruth we just heard in my own words, and I want you all to use your characters to act it out as I read it. You have to work together to do this right. OK?

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

That was so fun to watch you re-enact the account of Ruth! The main characters in today’s lesson were Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz. They all were faithful to God. God proved His mercy to Ruth and Naomi through Boaz, and God shows His mercy to us through Jesus. God is merciful to sinners.





Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Our lesson started when a family of four left Israel and headed to Moab because of a lack of food, during the time of the judges. Naomi had no idea what was about to happen. She was very sad when her husband and sons died. Yet God provided Ruth, her faithful daughter-in-law, to go back to Israel and help Naomi there.

When Ruth met Boaz, Boaz took responsibility and showed kindness, love, and mercy to Ruth and Naomi because he was a close relative. They were in need and Boaz redeemed them from the poor situation they were in—even though they had nothing to give back to him. Boaz paid their debts and married Ruth. And then God blessed them with a family. That family would one day lead to Jesus Christ—the Messiah and Redeemer. Remember, Ruth was King David's great-grandmother. And Jesus was in King David's family—called the Son of David. *Refer to the genealogy you put on the board earlier.*

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

? Who was the redeemer of Ruth and Naomi in our lesson today? *Boaz.*

Right! And his actions remind us of another Redeemer who was to come.

? Which Redeemer am I talking about now? *Jesus!*

Just as Boaz rescued Ruth, Jesus Christ rescues sinners. We have nothing to offer Him. We deserve only one thing—hell—because of our sins. But Jesus Christ offers forgiveness for sins through His perfect sacrifice for us on the Cross. Jesus is our Redeemer. He took the punishment for sin and offers eternal life to all who put their trust in Him.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

1 Samuel 16:7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."



PRAYER TIME

- Praise God for being our Redeemer and providing hope and life to sinners.
- Thank God for His Word and how He gives us glimpses into the lives of real people who have remained faithful to Him in tough times.
- Ask Him to change our hearts, so that we appreciate His compassion more and reflect it in every area of our lives.