

Ruth

LESSON 7



Book of Ruth

Old Testament 5
Part 1: Israel's Cycle of Disobedience; The Time of the Judges

SUNDAY MORNING

Old Testament 5 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Ruth

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Love never fails..." (1 Corinthians 13:8a).

OLDER CHILDREN: "For wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God" (Ruth 1:16b).

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["Ruth Loved Naomi"](#)
- ["Song of Ruth"](#)
- ["The Story of Ruth"](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [Judges and King Saul](#) Bible fact cards (provided under "O.T. 5 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)
- "Summary of the Bible" from "[Kids Prep](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Ruth A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*)
- Teacher (or another woman) dressed up like Ruth tells the story in first person. Show "photo album" of other people in the story as she tells the story.

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can be loyal (faithful) to my friends, to my family, and to God.



LESSON STARTS HERE

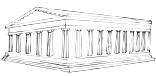
INTRODUCTION:

Review last week's lesson

Sometimes we have to make hard choices/decisions. [Let children tell you some decisions they, or possibly their parents, have had to make (e.g., whether to take a new job that will make the family move; whether to be nice to someone who no one else likes; etc.)] In today's lesson, we are going to talk about a woman who lived during the time of the judges and made a tough choice to follow God, and God blessed her.


POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. The book of Ruth is a story about love, respect, and commitment. It tells the story of:
 - A young woman's love, respect, and loyalty for her mother-in-law [define mother-in-law for younger children].
 - An older woman's love for her children and their spouses.
 - A man's love and respect for a young woman.
 - A young woman who was an ancestor of the Messiah.



HISTORICAL NOTE: It was a custom of the Jews to read the book of Ruth during the Feast of Weeks (also called the Feast of Wheat and was later called Pentecost). The story itself takes place “in the days when the judges ruled” (Ruth 1:1), but we don't know which judge. The book may have been written during David's reign, but the author is not known.

2. An Israelite man named Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their two sons Mahlon and Chilion, moved from Canaan to Moab to find food because of a severe famine in their homeland. God had commanded the Jews not to mix with the Moabites and people of the land of Canaan (Deuteronomy 23:3; Nehemiah 13:1; cf. Nehemiah 13:23; Ezra 9:1&ff.; Deuteronomy 7:3-4). [Abraham went to live in Egypt during a famine (Genesis 12:10ff.), and it was a terrible mistake.]



NOTE: **Elimelech** means “God is my king”; **Naomi** means “pleasantness”; **Mahlon** means “sickly”; **Chilion** means “pining.”

3. We are not told how long they stayed in Moab, but it was long enough for Mahlon and Chilion to come of age and to marry. Living in a foreign country, among idol-worshipping people, the sons married Moabite women. [Remember Lot's decision to move to Sodom and Gomorrah; his two daughters married there with disastrous results.]
4. As the family continued to live in Moab, tragedy struck. First, Elimelech died; then the two sons died. Three women were left alone with no family to take care of them or protect them. Naomi decided to return to Canaan. Ruth and Orpah, her daughters-in-law, started to go with her, but Naomi told them they should go back to their own families. Orpah did, but Ruth refused to leave Naomi alone. Ruth was willing to leave everything behind because of her love for her mother-in-law. (Read together Ruth 1:16-17.)

5. Two women alone, with little or no money, traveled back to Bethlehem, where Naomi and Elimelech had married and had their children years earlier. When Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem, the other older women recognized Naomi, but apparently were surprised at how Naomi had changed in appearance. They talked among themselves about her, and probably about the foreign girl she had brought home with her. Naomi told them not to call her Naomi any more, but to call her “Mara,” which means “bitter,” because of the heartache she had endured.
6. With her sweet spirit, and her commitment and love, Ruth gradually helped Naomi leave that bitterness behind. She willingly went to work to help take care of Naomi, even though she was not Ruth’s blood mother.
7. God commanded that the Israelites not gather every bit of harvest when reaping their fields. They were to leave the leftovers for the poor and the strangers to be able to gather (Leviticus 19:9-10). Ruth was among those who gathered what harvesters (gleaners) left behind in the fields, and she happened to do so in the fields of Boaz, Naomi’s late husband’s relative.
8. Boaz was impressed with Ruth for helping to take care of Naomi, and encouraged her to stay in his fields to gather grain, and to drink from the water that his servants had drawn. He also made sure that none of the young men would bother her and told them to let her get more than even the leftovers.
9. Ruth brought home barley to Naomi that night and told her what happened. Naomi encouraged her to continue to go back only to Boaz’s land each day throughout the harvest time.
10. One of the laws of the Old Testament said that the closest male relative (kinsman) could buy back (redeem) an estate that had been sold due to poverty so that the land would not be lost to the family (Leviticus 25:23-28). Naomi had sold her husband’s land due to poverty (Ruth 4:3). Also, the relative was expected to marry the widow of the kinsman who died, if he was able, and have children with her in order to allow the man who died to have an heir and a continued name in Israel (Deuteronomy 25:5-10; cf. Genesis 38:8-9). These laws were designed by God to provide some protection for Israelite women and children, as well as to keep the inheritances of the Promised Land in the correct families and tribes.
11. Knowing about these laws, Naomi encouraged Ruth to work in the fields of Boaz. The man who was the next of kin did not want to redeem Naomi’s land or take responsibility for Ruth and Naomi. So Boaz stepped in.



HISTORICAL NOTE: The custom of giving one’s sandal (as in Ruth 4:7-8) was a way of sealing an agreement. Read Deuteronomy 25:5-9.

12. Boaz and Ruth married and had a son named Obed who would be the grandfather of David. After Obed was born, the women in the town told Naomi that Ruth was a “daughter-in-law who loves you and is better to you than seven sons.” Because of Ruth’s loyalty to and love for Naomi, she gained a new homeland, a new husband, a son, and the favor of the great God of Israel. The book of Ruth begins with great sorrow and hardship; it ends with great joy and hope.
13. Loyalty means being faithful to one’s country, to one’s husband or wife, to your church, or more importantly, to God. It means standing by someone/helping someone when he/she is having a hard time—or when everyone else has turned away from him/her. (Other words to use to describe loyalty: dedicated, devoted, faithful, steadfast, and trustworthy. Discuss this as is appropriate for your individual class.)



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the article “[The Biblical View of Women](#)” by Kyle Butt on the Apologetics Press Web site for a response to the allegation that Scripture depicts women as inferior to or less valuable than men.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

Ages 2-5:

- “[Ruth Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Let the children act out the story, or ask members of the youth group to act out the story.
- Coloring and activity pages in *Bible Stories to Color and Tell* for ages 3-6 from 21st Century Christian (pp. 63-64)
- Help each child make a Ruth puppet from a paper sack. Write the memory verse on the back of the puppet. (“Ruth Puppet Cutouts” in [black and white](#) and in [color](#) provided in activity sheets)

1st-2nd Graders:

- “[Ruth Crossword Puzzle](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- On index cards write the names of key people/places from lessons in this unit, and put them in a basket. Have children take a card and tell the significance of the person/place on his/her card.
- Coloring and activity pages in *Bible Stories to Color and Tell* for ages 6-8 from 21st Century Christian (pp. 60-61)

3rd-4th Graders:

- “[Ruth Crossword Puzzle](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- On index cards write the names of key people/places from lessons in this unit and put them in a basket. Let each child take a card and tell the significance of the person/place on his/her card.
- Have the children read the following:
 - Ruth [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the Ruth quiz from AP’s [Advanced Bible Reader](#) site for the children to take.
 - “Ruth: Ordinary Woman, or Ancestor of Christ?” article from *Discovery* magazine: [December, 2001](#)
 - *Ruth and Naomi*, Arch Books, by Karen Sanders
 - *The Story of Ruth and Naomi*, by Alice Joyce Davidson, An Alice in Bibleland Storybook
 - *Ruth the Harvest Girl*, by Carine Mackenzie, Christian Focus Publications (DISCLAIMER: p. 6—the text does not say Ruth immediately left the gods of Moab after marrying Mahlon)
 - *Gideon and the Times of the Judges*, by Joy Melissa Jensen, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing House (DISCLAIMERS: change “bride-to-be” on p. 33 to “wife”; p. 34: the Bible does not say that the foxes were tied together with oil-soaked rags that were lit; p. 42: remove “at least one of”)

SONGS:

“RUTH LOVED NAOMI” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*
(Tune: “Trust and Obey”)

Ruth loved Naomi so,
In the long, long ago;
She would not go back to her land.

“Where you go, I will go,
Where you die, I will die!”
With Naomi, she then took her stand.

CHORUS:

She loved her so! As all of us know;
She followed Naomi,
Where'er she did go.

“SONG OF RUTH” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*
(Tune: “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”)

Where thou goest, I will go.
Where thou lodgest I will lodge.
Thy people will my people be.
Thy God will be a God to me.

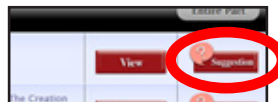
Where thou goest, I will go.
Where thou lodgest I will lodge.

“THE STORY OF RUTH”

Author: Jewel Kendrick
(Tune: “Down in the Valley”)
(Words: See *Sing a Story: Volume I*, by Jewel Kendrick)

*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

*** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



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Part 1: Israel's Cycle of Disobedience; The Time of the Judges

WEDNESDAY EVENING

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PERSONAL APPLICATION:

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INTRODUCTION:

Review [O.T. 5 Bible Facts Flashcard](#) (provided under “O.T. 5 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Review Sunday’s lesson (see [O.T. 5 Review Questions](#) for example questions)

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

See Sunday morning’s lesson

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