

## Naomi, Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 1-4)

This is a story of redemption, commitment and love. It occurs during the period of the Judges, a time of rebellion, a time of everyone doing what was right in their own eyes, and a time of God's judgment. We find a family apart from God living in the land of Moab when tragedy strikes. First Naomi's husband dies, then both of her sons die; leaving her and her 2 daughters-in-law alone. These tragedies lead to a God consciousness that will bring Ruth into the royal line of Christ! All because of Ruth's resolute commitment to her mother-in-law and to adopt the culture and the God of Israel. When Ruth and Naomi go to the land of Judah, Ruth gleanes from the fields of Boaz where Ruth and Boaz meet and Boaz responds to Ruth. Boaz was a kinsman redeemer and he was a spiritual man. Ruth was a gracious woman. The trials of Ruth's past had not crushed her spirit. Her attitude more than her physical appearance made her beautiful to Boaz. So, Naomi begins planning a match. But, really, it is a match made in Heaven. Ruth makes a request of Boaz to be redeemed. Basically, she proposes to Boaz. Boaz goes to the gate of the city, a court room scene, and informs the closer relative of the situation. They agree that Boaz will be the redeemer. So, Ruth gets redeemed and the family land is bought back by Boaz. They have a son, Obed, who is the father of Jesse, the father of David. Providentially, Ruth is the great-great-many more greats grandmother of Jesus Christ! Now, let's play out this great love story.

## Say it! Play it! Pray it!

<b>Objectives:</b>	Play out the book of Ruth and the story of commitment and love for a mother-in-law, and the love of a kinsman redeemer. Gain insight into your own faith. Have fun with your family.
<b>Number of Players:</b>	4 or more (narrator, Naomi, Orpah, Ruth, Boaz, Boaz's workers, Closer Relative)
<b>Length:</b>	30 minutes - 1 hour
<b>Set up:</b>	You can get as elaborate as you like. As the Narrator is reading, the separate characters should act out what is being said and dramatize how these events make them feel.

**Narrator:** Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there. Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. Now they took wives of the women of Moab: The name of one was Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years. Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

*(begin acting out this next part as the narrator reads)*

**Narrator:** Then Naomi arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard that the Lord had visited His people by giving them bread. Therefore she

went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to Ruth and Orpah,

**Naomi:** Turn back, my daughters. Why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

**Narrator:** Then they lifted up their voices and wept. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and went back home to Moab. But Ruth clung to Naomi and said,

**Ruth:** Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you. For wherever you go, I will go. And, wherever you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, shall be my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me!

**Narrator:** Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And all the city was excited because of them. And the women asked, “Is this Naomi?”

**Naomi:** Do not call me Naomi. Call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the Lord has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?

**Narrator:** So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest, about mid to late April. There was a relative of Naomi’s husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz. So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi,

**Ruth:** Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor.

**Naomi:** Go, my daughter.

**Narrator:** Then she left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech. Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers,

**Boaz:** The Lord be with you!

**Workers:** The Lord bless you!

**Boaz:** Whose young woman is this?

**Workers:** It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. And she said ‘Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.’ So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house.

**Narrator:** Then Boaz said to Ruth,

**Boaz:** You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn.

**Narrator:** So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him,



# FAMILY STUDY

**Ruth:** Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?

**Boaz:** It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. The Lord repay your work and a full reward be given you by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge.

**Narrator:** And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying

**Boaz:** Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her. Leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her.

**Narrator:** When Ruth arrive home she told Naomi all that had happened.

**Naomi:** Blessed be he of the Lord, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead! This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives. My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself. Put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor. Do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. When he lies down, notice the place where he lies and go in and uncover his feet, and lie down. Then he will tell you what you should do.

**Ruth:** All you say I will do.

**Narrator:** So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her. Now it happened at midnight that Boaz was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet.

**Boaz:** Who are you?

**Ruth:** I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative.

**Boaz:** Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman. Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I. Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you -- good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the Lord lives! Lie down until morning.

**Narrator:** In the morning Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by.

**Boaz:** Come aside, friend, sit down here. Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. And I thought to inform you. Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.

**Closer Relative:** I will redeem it..



# FAMILY STUDY

**Boaz:** On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance.

**Closer Relative:** I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption or yourself, for I cannot redeem it.

**Narrator:** And Boaz said to the elders and all the people,

**Boaz:** You are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi. Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate. You are witnesses this day.

**Narrator:** So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son. And they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

**Discussion:** Have each person share how it felt to them to play the role they did and what insights they gained about the people they played. Questions to consider: Why do you think Ruth was so committed to Naomi? Have you each been this committed to the relationships in your life? What do Ruth's actions say about her attitude? What do Boaz's actions say about his character? What is a kinsman redeemer? How are Boaz and Christ alike in this aspect? Are there things about your character that you would like to change? And, what are some practical steps you can do today to make those changes? How can you help each other in your commitment to your family.

**Prayer:** Close in prayer thanking God for His provision and for all that you have learned and the fun you had with your family.