

# THE STORY OF RUTH

## RUTH



**KEY PASSAGE:** Philippians 4:19

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** *How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over His creation according to His perfect plan.*

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Ruth was in great need and unable to provide for herself. God provided Boaz as her redeemer. We are in great need and unable to save ourselves from our sin. God provided Jesus as our Redeemer.

**STORY POINT:** God provided a family redeemer for Ruth.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

### **LEADER Bible Study**

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The book of Ruth weaves a redemption story that begins with one family from Bethlehem and points toward the Messiah born in the same city. In the story of Ruth, we see how God sees and cares for His people, even demonstrating His love for the nations through a Moabite woman who became a part of Jesus' lineage. God's provision for not only Ruth, but all people, is revealed through the theme of a redeemer.

What does Ruth's story teach us about our need for redemption? How does faith play a role in this book of the Bible?

In the time of the judges, famine overtook the land of Judah. So, a man named Elimelech traveled with his family to the land of Moab. Eventually, Elimelech and his two sons died, leaving his wife Naomi and her two daughters-in-law seemingly without provision or protection in their time of need. Naomi granted her late sons' wives to return to their homelands, yet Ruth swore to remain with Naomi and declared that Naomi's God would be her God too.

Ruth remained faithful to Naomi and took to the fields to glean grain for them both. It was there she received kindness from the field's owner Boaz, whom she soon learned was their family redeemer. Boaz had the power to bring Ruth and Naomi back into Elimelech's family so their lineage would continue. He took Ruth as his wife to provide her with the food and protection she needed. Like Ruth, we need provision, but our need goes even further: salvation from sin. The kindness of Jesus led Him to the cross to redeem us amid our sinful state.

Lead kids to see that this story goes beyond mere physical provision to reveal a God who made the way to offer us salvation. Pray that the children in your class would see God's sovereign hand at work in this story and that they would trust in Jesus as the perfect and final Redeemer.



#### PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



#### WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



#### LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



#### LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



#### LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



## WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

**SAY** “Have you ever gone on a journey or a trip where you didn’t know where you were going? Were you excited or scared? Tell me about it.”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### OPTION 1: WHAT DO YOU NEED?



Form kids into five groups and give them paper and a pen. Tell kids that you are going to give them an activity. Challenge kids to think of all the items they might need for their activity and write them down. Consider the following examples or create your own: kayaking down a river, painting a picture, swimming in the ocean, hiking in the woods, baking a cake. For example, for kayaking down a river, kids may write down a *kayak*, *paddle*, *life jacket*, *sunscreen*, *bug spray*, *shoes that can get wet*, etc. Then invite kids to share their activity and what they wrote down. Invite groups to add any items that might not have been shared.

**SAY** “Every day we have specific items we need to help us with activities. We also have important needs such as food, air, water, and clothing. Today, we will see how a woman named Ruth had a need. Let’s get ready to hear how **God provided a family redeemer for Ruth** and met her need.”

#### OPTION 2: BUY AND SPELL

Before the session, write the letters *REDEEM* on individual note cards. Create a set for each group of three or four kids. Then give each group six pennies.

Set each group’s note cards in individual piles at the opposite end of the room. Stand near the note cards. Tell groups that one kid will run to you and “buy back” a note card by giving you a penny. Once they’ve “bought” the card, they can pick it up and run back to their team. Challenge kids to arrange the note cards to form a word. The first group to come up with the word *redeem* wins. If groups struggle, give hints such as “The first letter is R.”

**SAY** “You spelled out the word *redeem*, which means ‘to buy back’ or ‘pay off a debt.’ The Bible uses the word *redeem* to help us understand how Jesus’ death paid the price for our sin, which was infinitely more costly than a penny. Our redemption cost Jesus His life. Jesus redeems those who trust in Him. In our story, we’ll see how a woman named Ruth was redeemed through the kindness of a man named Boaz.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





## LOVE God by Applying the Story

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Gather the Words” activity page.

**SAY** “ Today, we will learn how God provided for Ruth and how He provides for our greatest need as well. ”

### 1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Ruth 4. Tell kids that the book of Ruth is in the History division of the Old Testament. Remind kids that Ruth and Naomi traveled from Moab (K7) to Bethlehem (I4). Discuss how hundreds of years later, Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.

Consider comparing the map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Bethlehem.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Ruth 4:9-10 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

**SAY** “ God provided a family redeemer for Ruth, and she was saved from becoming poverty-stricken. Boaz bought back the field that once belonged to Naomi’s husband, and he chose to marry Ruth. This act of kindness gave Ruth a hope and a future. ”

Through Ruth’s family, God had a plan to provide us with a Redeemer. Jesus shed His own blood to pay the price for our sin. Jesus redeems those who trust in Him so they can be made right with God. Through faith in Jesus, we have an eternal hope and a future. ”

### 2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

**SAY** “ Do you think the cost of sin is high? Can anyone pay the debt for their sin? Why not? ”

Tell kids that our sin has an infinite cost because we sin against an infinitely holy God. Discuss how we can never pay the debt for our sin. Remind kids that Jesus paid the price in full for our sin when He shed His blood on the cross. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Pet. 1:18-19.)

**SAY** “ Ruth was not an Israelite. Can anyone become a part of God’s family? Why? ”

Remind kids that Ruth was a Moabite, but she chose to follow the one true God. Discuss how faith in Jesus is the only way to become a part of God’s family. Tell kids that any person can trust in Jesus and follow Him. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 10:11-13.)

**SAY** “ Who was Boaz’s great grandson? ”

Tell kids that King David, who we’ll learn about later, was the great grandson of Boaz. Discuss how the difficult circumstances of Ruth’s life were not an obstacle to God. Share how God had a plan for Ruth’s life, and in His plan, He had determined to use her family to bring Jesus into the world. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 1:17.)



## LIVE the Mission

### 1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

#### OPTION 1: ALL IN THE FAMILY

Before the session, cut out the cards from the “All in the Family” printable for each pair of kids. Form kids into pairs and provide each pair with a set of cards in random order. Distribute Bibles to each pair and invite kids to turn to Matthew 1:1-6 and Luke 3:32-38. Direct each pair to place the cards in the order of the genealogies. Then ask kids to read Matthew 1:16 to learn who eventually came from these families.

**SAY** “*God’s promise to send the Messiah into the world was accomplished through families. In today’s story we learned how God provided a family redeemer for Ruth. When Boaz acted as Ruth’s family redeemer, God also had a plan to use Boaz and Ruth to be in the family line of Jesus. Like God provided Boaz to be Ruth’s family redeemer, God provided Jesus to redeem us from our sin. Anyone who trusts in Jesus as Savior and Lord is forgiven of sin forever.*”

#### OPTION 2: IS IT TRUE?



Form kids into two teams. Review the Bible story by asking each team if a statement is true or false. Explain that if the team guesses correctly, they receive a point. Begin with following examples and then add your own:

- Naomi came from Moab.
- Ruth was a widow.
- Boaz protected Ruth.
- Naomi traveled back to Jerusalem.
- Ruth had a son named Jesse.
- Naomi gathered grain from Boaz’s field.
- We cannot pay the debt of our sin.

**SAY** “*The story of Ruth points us to what is true about God: God loves and rules over His creation according to His perfect plan. God had a perfect plan for Ruth and provided for her needs. We can trust that God has a perfect plan for our lives as well. When we trust in Jesus, God guides us to what is best and provides for our greatest need.*”

### 2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for sending Jesus to be our Redeemer. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Family Portraits” on the activity page.