

READING

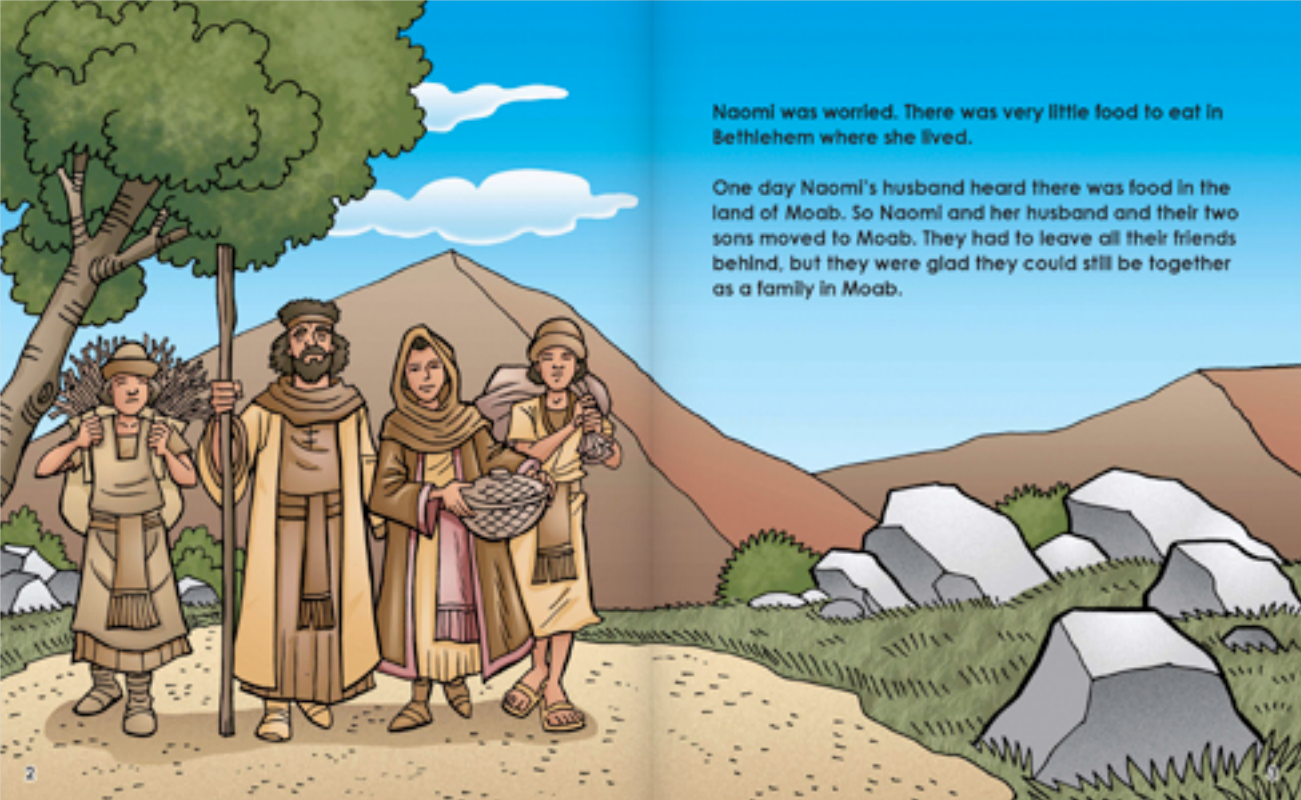
# Ruth



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Illustrations Steven Butler

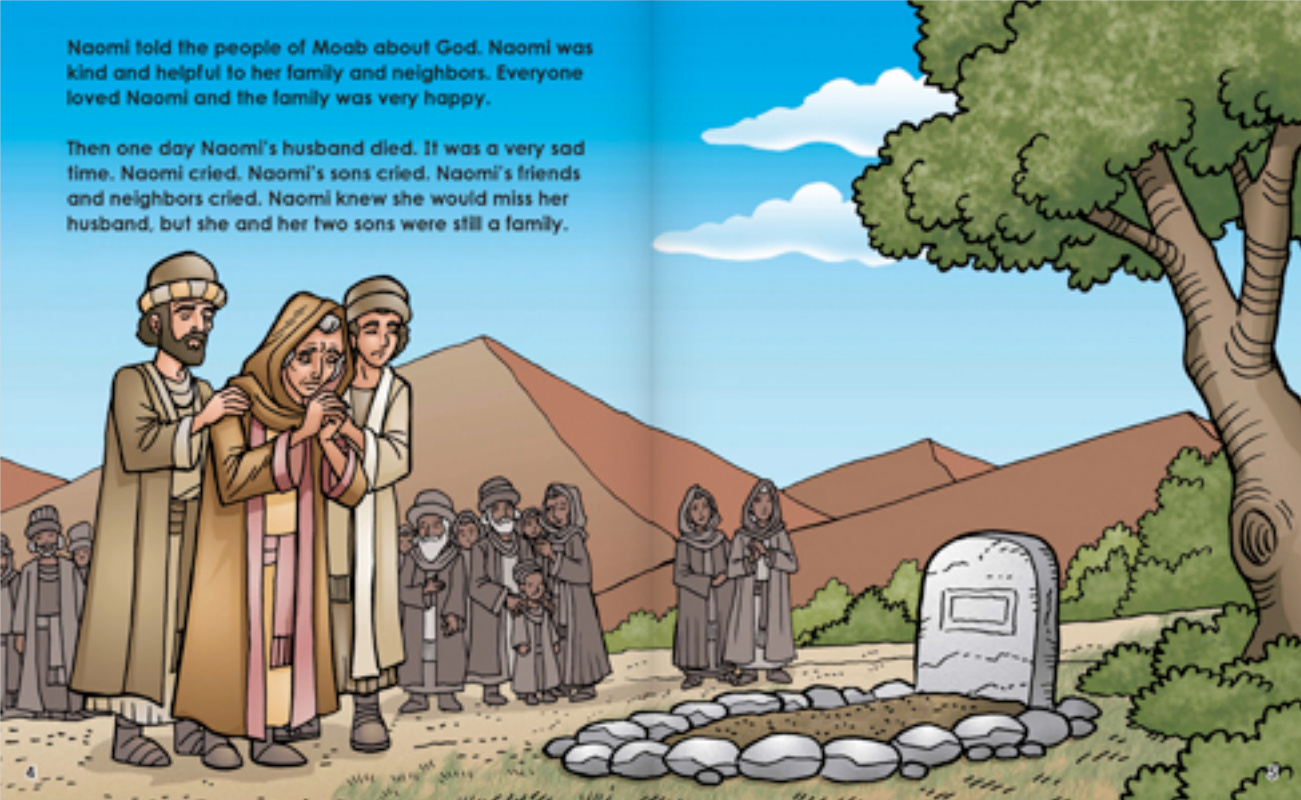


Naomi was worried. There was very little food to eat in Bethlehem where she lived.

One day Naomi's husband heard there was food in the land of Moab. So Naomi and her husband and their two sons moved to Moab. They had to leave all their friends behind, but they were glad they could still be together as a family in Moab.

Naomi told the people of Moab about God. Naomi was kind and helpful to her family and neighbors. Everyone loved Naomi and the family was very happy.

Then one day Naomi's husband died. It was a very sad time. Naomi cried. Naomi's sons cried. Naomi's friends and neighbors cried. Naomi knew she would miss her husband, but she and her two sons were still a family.



When Naomi's sons grew up, they married women of Moab. One son married Orpah, and the other married Ruth. They all lived together for about ten years.

Then one day the two sons died! Now Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth were alone. Naomi knew she would miss her sons, but she, Orpah, and Ruth were still a family.







Then Naomi heard there was food again in Bethlehem. Naomi had never stopped thinking about her home there. She decided to leave Moab.

Naomi got ready to leave. Ruth and Orpah wanted to go with her, but Naomi said, "Go home to your own families. May God bless you."

"No, we will go with you to your people," Ruth replied.

Naomi shook her head. "No, you must turn back, my daughters. You do not need to go with me."

They all cried and kissed each other.



Orpah listened to Naomi and decided to go back to her own family, and to her old gods.

But Ruth clung to Naomi. "Don't ask me to leave you," she cried. "Wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you live, I will live. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God."

Then Naomi and Ruth went to Bethlehem together.



When they arrived in Bethlehem, it was harvest time. Men were cutting the grain and tying it into sheaves. Women were walking behind, picking up stalks of grain that had fallen on the ground.

Ruth turned to Naomi. "Let me go and gather grain so we will have food to eat."

"Go, my daughter," Naomi replied.





Ruth found a field where reapers were cutting grain. She asked the man in charge if she could follow the reapers and gather what they had missed.

The man agreed, so Ruth followed the reapers picking up as much as she could. Soon she came to a part of the field that belonged to a man named Boaz. Boaz was a very rich man. He was also a relative of Naomi's husband who had died.



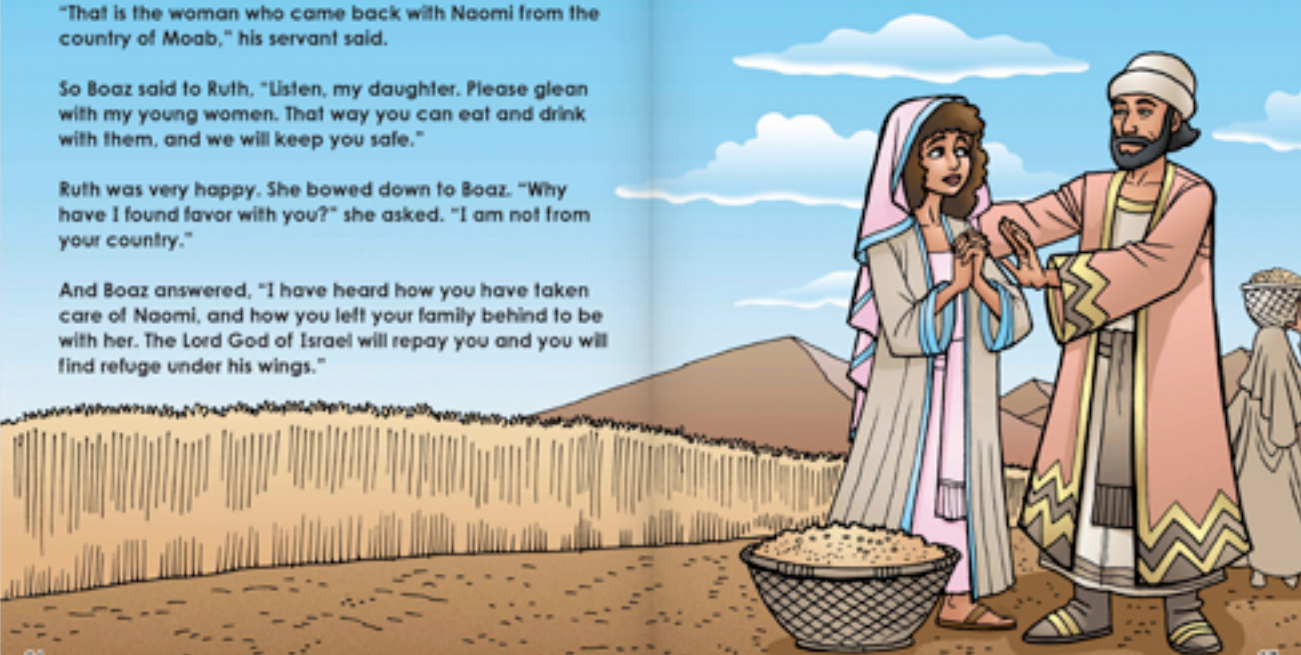
Boaz was looking at his field when he saw Ruth. Turning to his servant he asked, "Who is that young woman?"

"That is the woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab," his servant said.

So Boaz said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Please glean with my young women. That way you can eat and drink with them, and we will keep you safe."

Ruth was very happy. She bowed down to Boaz. "Why have I found favor with you?" she asked. "I am not from your country."

And Boaz answered, "I have heard how you have taken care of Naomi, and how you left your family behind to be with her. The Lord God of Israel will repay you and you will find refuge under his wings."



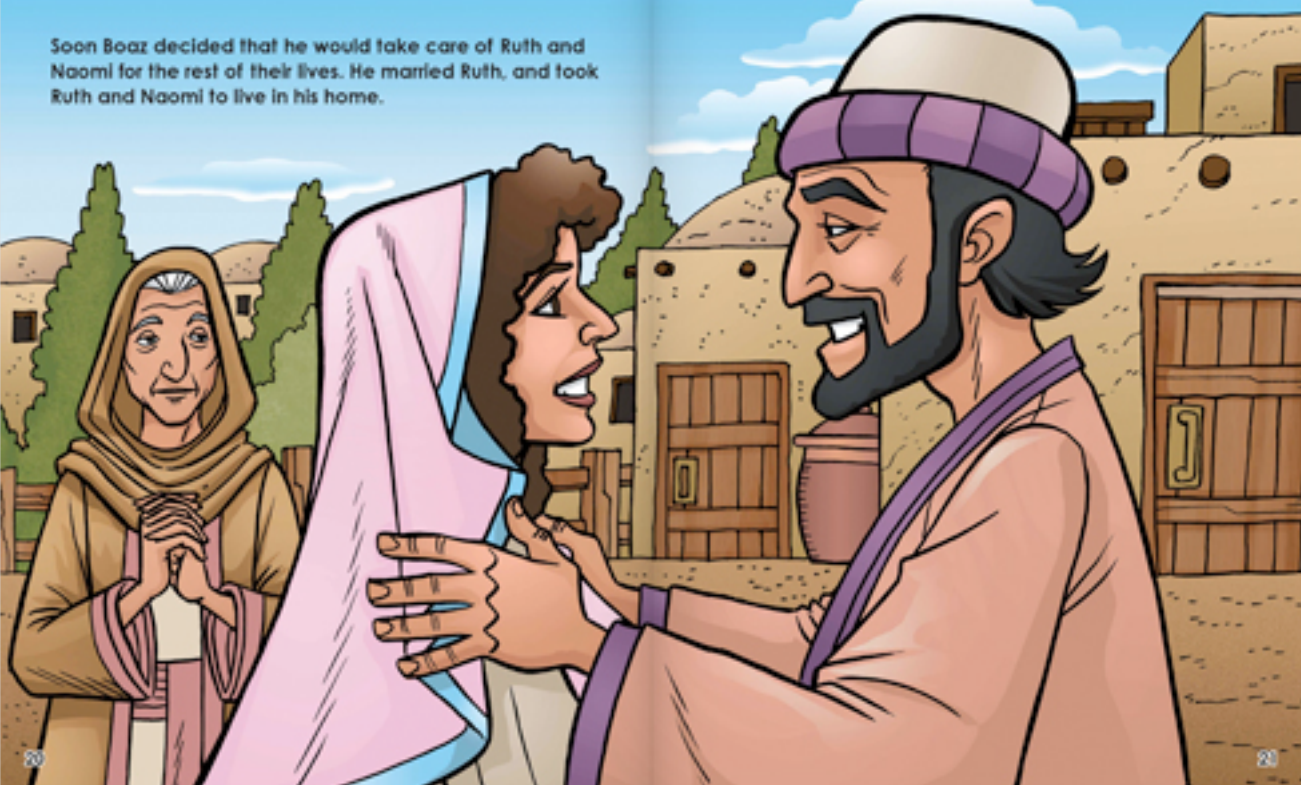
Then Boaz told his reapers, "Let Ruth glean from among the sheaves, and let extra grain fall for her so she will have plenty to take home."

So Ruth gleaned in Boaz's fields for the entire harvest. Each day she brought home lots of grain to Naomi.

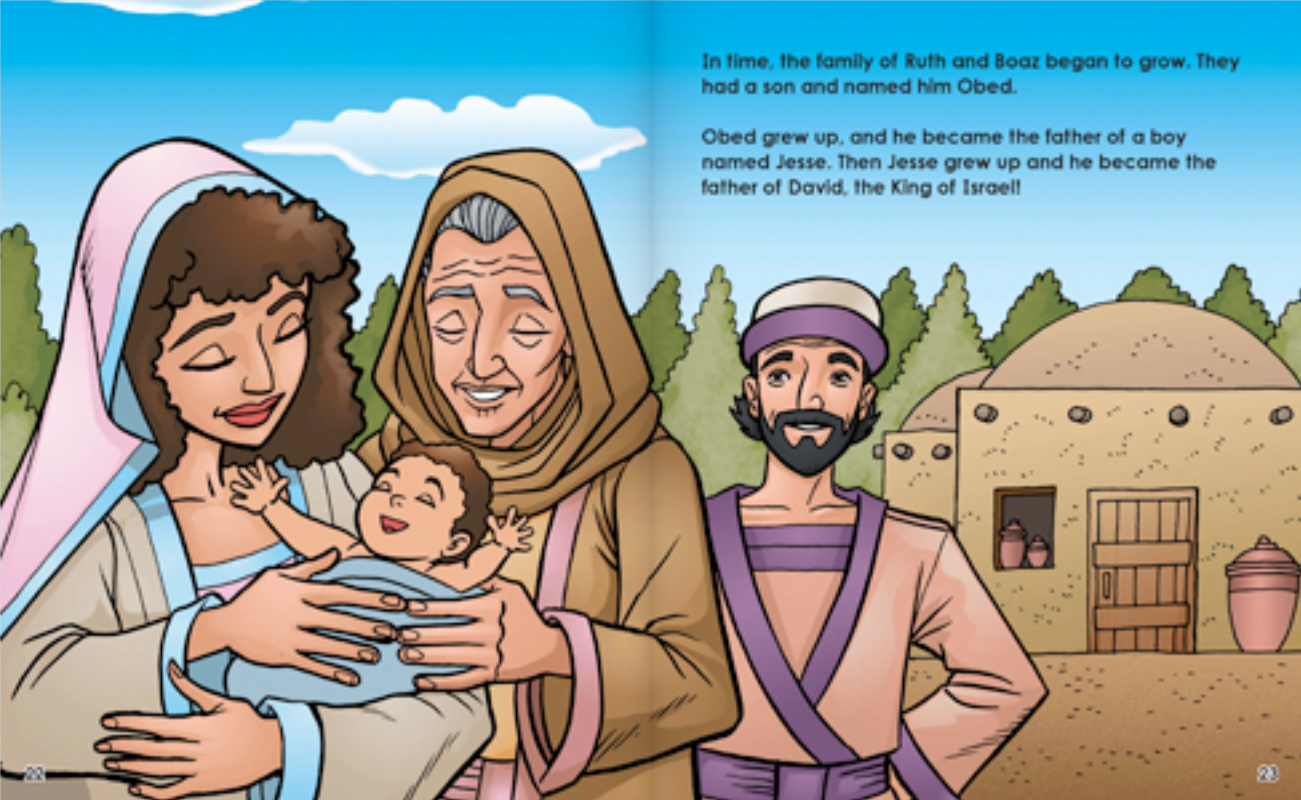




Soon Boaz decided that he would take care of Ruth and Naomi for the rest of their lives. He married Ruth, and took Ruth and Naomi to live in his home.







In time, the family of Ruth and Boaz began to grow. They had a son and named him Obed.

Obed grew up, and he became the father of a boy named Jesse. Then Jesse grew up and he became the father of David, the King of Israel!

Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz were a very important family.  
Generations later a very special baby was born into their  
family — Jesus, the son of the living God!

