

Ruth

BOAZ THE KINSMAN REDEEMER

Review

- At a young age, Ruth and Orpah became widows.
- In ancient times, women were very dependent upon their husbands.
- If a husband died, his property and belongings did not go to his wife but to the man who owned the family birthright. The widow was left with nothing.
- If someone didn't help her, she would spend the rest of her life in extreme poverty.
- Foreigners were not always welcomed and as a Moabitess some of the young men may not have been respectful to Ruth. Boaz promised Ruth protection from the remarks and actions of such young men.

Introduction

We have met a gracious woman named Ruth and now we will meet Boaz the kinsman-redeemer. Thirteen times in the book of Ruth the Hebrew word "Gaal" (go-el) is translated as "kinsman." Boaz was a rich and generous farmer in Bethlehem whose name means strength. Boaz is the hero of the story simply because he did the right thing at the right time. His actions had a tremendous impact on Ruth and Naomi. In this lesson, we are reminded of God's sovereignty. God is in complete control of the events that shape our lives.

Progression of Events

- Ruth said to Naomi one day, "I am going to the fields. Maybe someone will be kind enough to let me gather the grain he leaves behind" (Ruth 2:2). Ruth did not sit around waiting for good fortune to come her way, nor did she become bitter. She knew the needs she and Naomi had. She was neither afraid to admit her needs or work hard to provide.
- When a field was harvested, according to Israelite law, the corners of the field were not to be harvested and any grain dropped was to be left. Gleaners were poor people who were allowed to pick up the dropped grain and glean the corners of the field. The purpose of this law was to provide for the poor. This law is written in Leviticus 19:9, 23:22 and Deuteronomy 24:19. Since Ruth and Naomi were widows and had no means of providing for themselves, Ruth was allowed to glean.
- The field where Ruth asked permission to glean "happened" to belong to Boaz. "And her hap was"

(Ruth 2:3) that she providentially was led to that part of the cultivated land, which belonged to Boaz.

- Boaz asked his servant who the young woman was. The servant told Boaz of Ruth's hard work and kindness to Naomi. Ruth was not too proud to glean in the fields. She took the initiative to work hard and Boaz took notice.
- From the moment Ruth chose to follow Naomi, her reputation as a kind and generous person had begun. Because of her reputation, Boaz was impressed and he welcomed her to follow behind his reapers so she could gather the best grain that was dropped. Boaz said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Don't go to gather grain for yourself in another field. Don't even leave this field at all, but continue following closely behind my women workers" (Ruth 2:8).
- "Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, why have I found favor in thy sight, that thou should take knowledge of me, seeing I am a foreigner?" (Ruth 2:10). This verse shows Ruth's humility.
- Boaz invited Ruth to have lunch with him. When she was finished, Boaz instructed his men to leave extra grain for her to gather. Boaz went above and beyond the intent of the law. He provided abundantly for those in need.
- Ruth returned home with what she had gleaned and what she had saved from her lunch with Boaz. An ephah of barley is about a ten-day supply. When Ruth told Naomi whose field she had gleaned in, Naomi said, "Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, the man is nigh of kin unto us, one of our near kinsmen" (Ruth 2:20). As read in lesson one, Naomi had become bitter, but her faith in God stayed true. She gave praise to God for the kindness of Boaz.
- Naomi advised Ruth to continue to work in Boaz's field and stay under his protection. Ruth followed the advice of Naomi and continued gleaning through the barley harvest and the wheat harvest that followed.

Did You Know...

Boaz is seen as a type of Christ who came from Bethlehem. He was the kinsman who could redeem. As a redeemer he was not only a great and mighty man, but also a man of wealth. This is important because redemption is costly. Boaz was Lord of the harvest just as Christ is. Boaz gave sustenance and promised Ruth protection, reward and recompense. Christ offers the same to each of us. "But whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). Other scriptures: John 7:37-39; Revelation 21:6; Psalm 17:8; 36:7.

Discussion and Questions

1. How did God take care of the poor under the Law of Moses?
2. What is gleaning?
3. Why did Ruth have the right to glean?
4. Who was Boaz?
5. How did Ruth "happen" upon the field of Boaz?
6. What did Boaz offer to do for Ruth?
7. What did Ruth bring home to Naomi?

8. Who did Naomi say Boaz was?
9. What does kinsman mean?
10. What advice did Naomi give Ruth?
11. Do you think Naomi is already thinking ahead for Ruth?

Memory Verse

“Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found favor in thy sight, that thou should take knowledge of me, seeing I am a foreigner?”

Ruth 2:10

Craft: Grain Wreath

Materials

- White poster board
- Black markers
- Glue
- Scissors
- Wheat or other grain
- Ribbon

Directions

1. Cut out a wreath shape from the white poster board.
2. On one section of the wreath write the day's memory verse, Ruth 2:10.
3. At the top of the wreath make a loop with the ribbon and glue to the back so that you can hang the wreath.
4. Pass out the grain. If you would like, the children could separate the seed from the chaff like Ruth did. If you do this, wet the grain the night before so it is a little softer.
5. Glue the grain onto the wreath.

Discuss how the wreath can remind them of how Ruth would glean the fields for her and Naomi and of the kindness of Boaz.