

# Session 4

## Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz

Children see how God uses people to take care of each other

**Scripture:** Ruth 1–4

**Supplies:**

- Balloons
- Copies of Ruth and Boaz on red paper and scissors
- Paper and stationery
- Ingredients to make sandwiches (remember butter knives)



**Welcome**

**The amoeba game:**

Give each child a balloon. Let the group stand in a circle with the balloons squished up between their bodies. The whole group must now move as a unit between two areas.



**Worship**

**Settle down ritual:** Let the children sit cross-legged and close their eyes. Repeat three times: “The Lord is with us.” Now say aloud: “Because the Lord is my shepherd, I am not afraid. He leads me through dark times and takes care of me.”



**Word**

The story of Ruth begins with an ordinary family who lived in a town called “Bread house” (Bethlehem). The father’s name meant “God is King”, the mother’s “Lovely”, and the sons “Sick” and “Tired”. In the strange country where they lived there was a great starvation. They were strangers in between enemies. “God is King” died and shortly after his two sons as well. His widow decided to return to her family. Her sons’ wives were named “the one who turned away” and “friend”. She changed her own name from “Lovely” to “Bitter”. This story is about someone who wanted to make a difference and then did. The story shows us how God’s goodness is brought forth in excess through good people.

*Dramatize the story and use the children to play the different roles. The children who don’t have a character, can be the group of women who spoke to Naomi, or the workers on Boaz’s land. Give them time to do all the actions and let them repeat words as you say them from time to time.*

Naomi decided to go back to her own country. Her two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, went with her. After walking for a while, Naomi turned to them and said: “You should rather go back to your parents. You were good to me and my sons. May God be good to you as well.” She kissed them and said goodbye. They burst into tears and told her: “No, we want to go with you, to your people.” Naomi told them: “My daughters, go back to your parents. How will it help if you went with me? I am too old to marry again. My life is so much harder than yours. It feels as if God is against me.” Naomi’s daughters-in-law started crying again. Orpah kissed Naomi and went back to her parents, but Ruth didn’t want to. Then Naomi said: “Look, your sister-in-law went back to her parents. You should,

too.” But Ruth said: “Please don’t keep asking me to leave you. Everywhere you go, I will go. Where you live, I’ll live. Your people are my people. Your God is my God. And where you someday die, I will die too.”

Naomi realized that she would never be able to convince Ruth to leave. She took Ruth with her to Bethlehem. When they arrived there everyone was happy. The women called: “Look! Naomi has come home!” Naomi told them: “Please don’t call me Naomi anymore, it means ‘to be cheerful’. Rather call me Mara, it means ‘bitter’. See, God has made my life bitter. I had so much when I left here. Now God has brought me back with nothing.” Naomi and Ruth went to live in Bethlehem.

It was time for the big harvest. There was a rich man who was in Naomi’s family. His name was Boaz. One day Ruth said to Naomi: “Mom, I would like to go to the lands where the harvest is. Would one of the farmers let me pick up some of the fallen crops? That’s how we can get some food.”

Naomi answered her: “My daughter, go and do so.” Ruth did and ended up on Boaz’s farm. The other workers were cutting the crops with a sickle (*children can pretend to be harvesting*). Sickles look like long, curved knives. Ruth walked behind the workers and when some of the crops fell on the ground, she picked it up. Boaz arrived and greeted his workers. He saw Ruth and asked his workers: “Who is that woman over there?” They answered him: “That’s the strange girl who came from Moab with Naomi.” Boaz went to Ruth and said: “Girl, you don’t have to go to the other farms. Stay here on mine and keep picking up crops.” Ruth was very happy and asked Boaz: “Sir, why are you so good to me? I wasn’t even born in this country.” Boaz answered: “I heard about everything that you did for your mother-in-law. May the Lord be good to you. You come from a different country where people worship different gods, but you chose to come here and worship our God.” Ruth answered: “Thank you, sir. You are very good to me.” Ruth spent the entire day picking up crops. At the end of the day she had nearly 13kg! She took it to her mother-in-law. Naomi asked: “Where did you pick up so much today?” She told Naomi about Boaz and his farm, and his kindness. Naomi called out: “May God be good to Boaz! This Boaz is family of my late husband, that’s why he should take care of us.” In those times the men had to take care of the widows in their family. Ruth said: “That’s not all. Boaz said I should come to his farm every day.” And so Ruth picked crops from Boaz’s farm every day.

One day Naomi said to Ruth: “Dearest, it is my job to find you a good man to take care of you. As you know, Boaz is family of ours. He will be working with the crops late tonight. Go to the fields and when everyone has gone to sleep, go lie at Boaz’s feet.” Ruth did as Naomi said.

When Boaz woke up in the middle of the night, he was very surprised to see Ruth there. Boaz asked her: “Who are you?” She answered: “I am Ruth. Will you take care of me and protect me?” Boaz answered: “Everything you ask of me, I will do. You mustn’t worry about it anymore.”

Early the next morning, even before the sun had risen, Boaz got up. He went to the town and Ruth went back to Naomi. Boaz went to sit at the gates of the town. There was another family member there who was more closely related to Naomi which meant that it was actually his duty to take care of Naomi and Ruth. Boaz spoke to him and because the man had other responsibilities, he was relieved that Boaz wanted to take care of them.

Boaz said: “You are all witnesses that I am buying everything that belonged to Naomi’s husband and sons. Ruth will become my wife. If we have children, they will inherit the land my family lives on.” Boaz then married Ruth. The Lord gave her a baby boy.

The women told Naomi: “Praise God, because he gave you a grandchild. May this son be even more important to Israel.” He was named Obed and later had many children and grandchildren. One of his grandchildren was King David, but we’ll learn about him later.

Children reflect on the story:

1. I wonder which character in the story you liked the most
2. I wonder what you would do if you were Ruth
3. I wonder if you know anyone who needs care
4. I wonder how you can thank those who take care of you



## Working and Playing

- Colour and cut out the heart. It reminds us of the love between Naomi and Ruth.
- Make sandwiches – one for yourself and one to give to someone else (both sandwiches can go home with the children and given to someone who needs it).
- Draw a picture of Ruth and Naomi

Closing prayer to end the session

