

=BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 8

Ruth

Objects to have:

Chalk and chalkboard and eraser

Bible books signs: Genesis through Judges

New Bible book sign: RUTH

About Ruth

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Using your Bible books signs, spend a little extra time saying the books of the Bible from Genesis through Judges. Point out the fact that one of the books is named after a man: Joshua. Tell the children that now we have come to a book in the Bible that is named after a lady: Ruth. Show the children the location of the book of Ruth in the Old Testament in your Bible.) The book of Ruth is about Ruth. The story of Ruth could have been put into the book of Judges because it happened while a judge was ruling over the Israelites.

Telling the story:

(Draw a house on the left side of the chalkboard.) Here is a house in Bethlehem. (Write Bethlehem above the house.) Ruth did not live in this house. A mother and a daddy and their two boys lived in this house in Bethlehem. The mother's name was Naomi. The daddy's name was Elimelech. Naomi and Elimelech knew that God loved them. God gave them two baby boys. They named one baby boy Mahlon; when they got the second baby boy, they named him Chilion. They were so happy together, the four of them! They were trusting God; God was taking care of them. The years went by; the boys were getting to be bigger boys.

Then it did not rain for a long time. Without enough rain, food did not grow. The people were eating up all the food they had stored in their cupboards. Soon there was not enough food to eat. Whenever Naomi and Elimelech went to the garden, they found that no beans were growing; no corn was growing. They would go to try to find food that they might buy from other people. Nobody else had enough food, either. Elimelech did not talk to God and ask Him to help them to find enough food; he just worried about what to do. Without asking God what to do, Elimelech decided to move away.

(Draw a road east from the house—to the right—halfway across the board.) Elimelech said, "We have to leave our house, Naomi. We have to travel down this road. It has not rained in such a long time that I don't think there is enough food in our country for us. I have figured it out by myself; we have to go to another country."

(Act this out.) Naomi packed all their clothes and Elimelech packed up pots and pans and other things. Naomi picked up some bundles, Elimelech picked up some bundles, Mahlon picked up some bundles, Chilion picked up some bundles. They all walked away from their house, down this road. (Draw four stick figures on the road.) They traveled to the Jordan River. (Draw the Jordan River.) They crossed the Jordan River. Since it has not rained, the Jordan River was not deep and flooding as it was in our story of Joshua's leading the Israelites into the Promised Land across the Jordan River; the River Jordan was only a stream.

Look! They left God's land! (Draw four stick figures on the other side of the Jordan River. Erase the four stick figures on the west of the Jordan River.) They left God's land! They would not be attending the church where they heard God's Word preached! They would not be living near God's people anymore! Oh, how bad! They went into the land of Moab.

They moved into a house in Moab. (Draw a house on the east—the right—of the Jordan River.) There was enough food in Moab, but there were terrible wrong things in Moab. The people lived bad lives, they did bad things, they said bad things. None of them cared at all to do what God wanted them to do. God was unhappy

with Elimelech! Elimelech had led his family into a wicked nation. God could not bless Elimelech and Naomi and Mahlon and Chilion there. That was the worst thing of all.

With no church to attend where the Bible was preached, Naomi and Elimelech really forgot about God. Because they forgot about God, so did their boys.

Then one day Elimelech died. Then there were only three people living in this house. (Erase one of the four stick figures.) Naomi and her two sons were the only three people living in this house in Moab. Naomi's two sons got bigger and bigger. Soon they were young men. Naomi's two sons did not talk to God about what they should be or about whom they should marry. That is because their mother and their daddy had not taught them to do this. When these two sons got big, they did not look around for friends who loved God. None of their friends loved God. Their boyfriends and their girlfriends prayed to statues that were made-up gods. Because these friends would not trust God, they did not want to do right, either.

Soon Naomi's two sons wanted to get married. (In front of the house draw two more stick figures.) Both got married to ladies who did not know God. In this house in Moab then lived five people: Naomi, her two sons, and the sons' two wives. I know the names of these two young ladies. One was named Ruth. The other was named Orpah.

One day Naomi, Ruth and Orpah were crying. (Erase the stick figures that represent Mahlon and Chilion.) Naomi, Ruth and Orpah were very sad. Mahlon and Chilion had died. Now the house in Moab had just the three ladies living in it.

Naomi said, "Orpah and Ruth, why don't you go back to where you used to live! I am going to go back home to Bethlehem. I have just remembered that God takes care of His people. Also, I have heard some news. I have heard that there is plenty of food back home. For all these years I have done what I have wanted to do; I have had no thought about what God wanted me to do. Now I am going back home to Bethlehem. You go back to where you used to live."

Orpah decided to go home. (Erase another stick figure.) She did not want to live the way God wanted her to live. She wanted to keep on bowing down to statues that were not God.

Ruth decided to do differently, however. Ruth said, "Naomi, I want to go with you. You just told me how much God loves us all. I am trusting God. I want to do what He wants me to do." Ruth meant it when she told Naomi, "I want your God to be my God, too." Ruth had learned that Jesus was going to come to earth someday; she trusted Jesus. Ruth got saved.

Naomi said, "Oh, Ruth, why don't you go back home? It won't be very exciting living with me. It will be just we two ladies living together."

Ruth said, "Please do not tell me to leave you. I want your people to be my people. I want your God to be my God."

"All right," said Naomi. "You may come with me, Ruth." So Naomi and Ruth went down this road back over the Jordan River and down this road back to Bethlehem. (Draw two stick figures back at Bethlehem; erase the two stick figures in Moab.)

Naomi felt good about getting back to Bethlehem! It was good to start going to Sunday school and church again! It was so good to have friends and neighbors (draw several stick figures) who prayed and who sang Sunday school songs and who always tried to obey God. And, Ruth was happy, too. Ruth was meeting all of Naomi's friends.

Ruth met a fine young man in Bethlehem. (Draw another stick figure.) This young man was a farmer. He was a very kind man, also. He was a very good man because he always wanted to do what God wanted him to do. Ruth

liked to be with this young man. Ruth had learned to do what God wanted her to do, just as this young man did. Ruth and this fine young man named Boaz got married. Boaz and Ruth lived happily ever after because their lives were always guided by God.

That is the story of the book of Ruth; I had to leave out some things because I would not have time to tell you everything that happened. I just happened to think of something. You know, when we die and go to Heaven, we are going to see all of these people who have loved Jesus before we were ever born! Won't it be fun to meet Ruth and Joshua and Moses and all the other people that we are learning about in our Bible? But, you won't get to go to Heaven unless you have trusted Jesus as your Saviour. Would you like to trust Him today?

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: Ruth 1:16, "And Ruth said...thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."