

UNIT 9 | SESSION 1

Splash 6/8/25

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

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



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Find the Way" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- handkerchief
- inflated balloon (optional)

Session Starter (Option 2)

- green chenille stems, 30
- yellow chenille stems, 30
- brown chenille stems, 30



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- "People in the Family of Jesus Spinner" printable, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "The Story of Ruth" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 9, Session 1" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "The Knapps in Tanzania" missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "My God (Philippians 4:19)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



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 helped take care of someone or something? Maybe a neighbor who was sick or a pet. How did you care for them and give them what they need?*

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Find the Way” activity page.

SAY *Today, we’ll learn how God cared for Ruth and provided her with a family redeemer.*

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: YOU GO, I GO



Form kids into pairs and explain that each pair will be completing a three-legged race. Instruct pairs to lock arms as you tie a handkerchief around one kid’s left leg and the other kid’s right leg. Then challenge pairs to race to from one side of the room to the other. If space is limited, consider playing this activity outside as the weather permits.

Alternatively, rather than a three-legged race, you may choose to lead pairs to hold an inflated balloon between their side as they walk from one side of the room to the other. If kids pop the balloon, use their hands, or drop the balloon, they must return to the starting line and begin again. The first team to successfully walk to the other side with their balloon intact wins.

SAY *The race wouldn’t work unless you and your partner worked together and went in the same direction. Today, we will learn about a woman named Ruth and how she chose to follow her mother-in-law Naomi. We’ll see how Ruth said, ‘Wherever you go, I will go. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.’*

OPTION 2: GATHER IT

Before the session, scatter 30 green chenille stems, 30 yellow chenille stems, and 30 brown chenille stems around the room. Form three teams of kids and assign a chenille stem color to each team. Challenge the teams to work together to gather their “grain.” Once teams have gathered all their “grain,” challenge them to divide the grain into bundles of five. The first team to have six bundles of grain wins. Repeat, if time allows.

SAY *Does anyone know what we can make with grain? [Allow response.] We can make bread with grain. Today, we will learn about a woman named Ruth who gathered grain from the field of a man named Boaz. Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi were poor and needed food to eat. God cared for Ruth, and **GOD PROVIDED A FAMILY REDEEMER FOR RUTH.***

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





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)



Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I am happy you’re here! Today, we will be in the Old Testament as we listen to a story from the book of Ruth. The story of Ruth took place during the same time as the book of Judges. Let’s find Ruth in our Bibles. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one and assist them in finding Ruth.]

The Bible tells us about the many ways God has cared for His people. Even from the first pages of Genesis, we learn how God provided a beautiful garden for His people, gave them delicious food to eat, and most importantly, God provided Adam and Eve with His presence. As we hear our story, we’ll learn how a woman named Ruth was in need. We’ll see how **GOD PROVIDED A FAMILY REDEEMER FOR RUTH**. [Display the Story Point Poster.] As we prepare to hear our story, let’s pray: ‘Dear God, thank You for being a good Father who cares for His people. Help our hearts believe the truth of Your Word. Amen.’”



* Praise You Anywhere
* Same God
* offering

worship

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.



SAY “Today, we will learn a new big picture question: How does God care for His creation? How do you think God cares for His creation? [Allow responses.] The answer we’ll learn is, God loves and rules over His creation according to His perfect plan. Let’s say the answer a couple of times together. [Repeat the big picture answer two more times.]

Because God loves His creation, He sees and hears His people in their times of need. Ruth was a woman who experienced a lot of sadness in her life. Yet, the Bible tells us how God provided a family redeemer for Ruth. God also had a plan for Ruth’s life and allowed her to be a part of the family line of Jesus.”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Today’s Bible story took place during the time of the judges. Last week, we learned about a judge named Samson whose strength came from God alone. We learned that, like Samson, we cannot please God on our own. We place our faith in Jesus and walk by the Holy Spirit to please God. Today, we will learn how God sees and cares for His creation. Let’s get ready to hear how God cared for Ruth.”



LEARN the Bible Story



1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Ruth. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The Story of Ruth.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE STORY OF RUTH

During the time of the judges, there was a famine in the land. A man named Elimelech left Israel with his wife Naomi and his two sons to try to find food in a land called Moab. His sons married two Moabite women. One was named Orpah, and the other was named Ruth.

Later, Elimelech and his two sons died, leaving Naomi without her two children and without her husband. **Naomi planned to go back to Israel** and told Orpah and Ruth to stay in Moab. She said, “May the LORD grant each of you a new husband.”

But Ruth replied, “Wherever you go, I will go. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.” So, Naomi and Ruth traveled to the town of Bethlehem. It was the beginning of the barley harvest.

Naomi and Ruth needed food, so Ruth decided to go to the fields and gather any grain that the harvesters left behind. The field she chose to gather grain in was owned by a man named Boaz. He noticed Ruth gathering grain in his field. He asked one of his servants, “Who is this young woman?”

The servant replied, “She is the young woman from Moab who returned with Naomi. She has been working hard since early morning.”

Boaz went to Ruth and said, “Please don’t go and gather grain in any other field. Stay close to my female servants and you will be safe. And if you get thirsty, drink from the jars my servants have filled.” Boaz also told his workers to pull out some of the good grain from the bundles and leave them behind for her to gather.

Ruth told Naomi about Boaz’s kindness. Naomi asked God to bless Boaz. Then she **told Ruth that Boaz was a family redeemer.** A family redeemer was a man who had the responsibility to help his relatives when they were in need.

Ruth went to Boaz and said, “Please take me under your wing, because you are a family redeemer to me.”

Boaz replied, “I will do for you whatever you say, because you are a woman of noble character.”

Boaz went to the town gate and spoke to the elders. **Boaz redeemed Ruth by buying back the land that once belonged to Naomi’s husband.** Then **Ruth and Boaz were married, and they had a son named Obed,** who would be the grandfather of the great Israelite King David.

STORYTELLING TIPS

Ask it: Prompt kids to think about the town of Bethlehem when you share how Naomi and Ruth traveled there. Ask kids if they know who was born in Bethlehem (Jesus).

Define it: Tell kids that the name Bethlehem means “House of Bread.” Emphasize Jesus’ words about Himself from John 6:35 and John 6:51 when Jesus said, “I am the bread of life” and “I am the living bread that came down from heaven.” Help kids understand how Jesus gave His life to provide for our salvation and satisfy our hearts.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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. 35

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY 36 After her husband died, Ruth was in great need and unable to provide for herself. Naomi was not able to provide for herself as well. Instead of leaving Naomi, Ruth promised to go wherever Naomi went and said Naomi's God would also be her God. So, Ruth and Naomi went to Bethlehem. God heard and saw their need for help. How did God care for Ruth and provide for her? **[Allow responses.]** God showed that He cared for Ruth by providing a field for her to gather grain in. And **GOD PROVIDED A FAMILY REDEEMER FOR RUTH.**

What is a family redeemer? **[Allow responses.]** A family redeemer was a close relative who helped his family member when he or she was in need or in trouble. God did not leave Ruth alone in her sadness and need. God provided Ruth with Boaz, and he became her husband. Boaz bought back the field that once belonged to Naomi's husband, and he made a way for Ruth and Naomi to live in security. Boaz was willing to set aside his own interests for the well-being of Ruth and Naomi.

Even though the book of Ruth takes place hundreds of years before Jesus was born, Ruth's story points us to God's love for us in Jesus. God's plans for Ruth's life affected all future generations because our Redeemer, Jesus, came from the family of Ruth. Jesus was a descendant of King David, who was the great-grandson of Ruth. Through this story we are reminded of how Ruth was in great need and unable to provide for herself and how God was working through her life to send the Savior into the world. 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. 35

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY 36 God cared for Ruth and had a plan for her life. God provided exactly what Ruth needed. God cares for us and had a plan to save us from sin. Jesus is our Redeemer who paid for our sin through His death on the cross. When we trust in Jesus, we are forgiven. Do you believe this? 35

(Tip: Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

* Gospel Poster

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the "Unit 9, Session 1" Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What should we do when we have fears that something might happen to us or our family?
2. Why can we trust Jesus to always provide what we need most?



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY ☞ Doug and Evelyn Knapp were appointed as missionaries to Tanzania, Africa, in 1963. The Knapps began to help the people of Tanzania with their farming needs. The Knapps also told the people about Jesus while Doug helped them learn more about gardening. ☞



Play the missions video. Tell kids that many people came to know and trust in Jesus through the Knapps' ministry of gardening. Share how these Christians went on to start new churches who shared the gospel with even more people. Close in prayer, thanking God for meeting both physical needs and spiritual needs for the people of Tanzania. Ask God to reveal ways we can help people understand how Jesus meets their greatest need.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)



Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Philippians 4:19 together.

SAY ☞ Our key passage reminds us that God promises to provide us with everything we need through faith in His Son, Jesus. God loves us, cares for us, and knows what we need most. ☞

Invite kids to clap their hands, pat their knees, or stomp their feet along as you recite the key passage aloud together. As you fall into a natural rhythm of reciting the key passage, vary the speed and volume at which you recite it. Encourage kids to recite it without you as they become more acquainted with the passage.

Lead kids to sing "My God (Philippians 4:19)." You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY ☞ Dear God, You are faithful to provide for us. We praise You for Jesus, who died for our sin. Help us trust You with the big things and the small things in our lives. Amen. ☞

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Ruth 1. 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 pointing out the location of Bethlehem (I4) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map to help kids understand where this story took place. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Ruth 1:1 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY 🍌 The story of Ruth tells us about two very different places, Moab and Bethlehem. Ruth was from the territory of Moab, but Naomi and her family were from Bethlehem in Judah. Ruth was not an Israelite, but she trusted in God and became part of His family.

The story of Ruth reminds us that God loves all people, not just the Israelites. God rescued Ruth and provided for her needs. He didn't turn her away or forget about her. In the city of Bethlehem, God provided a redeemer for Ruth and a Redeemer—Jesus—for all people! God loves each of us and invites us to be a part of His family through faith in Jesus. 🍌

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY 🍌 How did Ruth show she trusted God? 🍌

Tell kids how Ruth traveled to Naomi's homeland, declaring that Naomi's God would be her God too. Ruth kept her word to Naomi and gathered enough food for them both to eat. Instead of blaming God for the difficult things in her life, she remained faithful to Him and followed the advice of Naomi.

SAY 🍌 How does God provide the things we need? 🍌

Explain to kids that God created the world and filled it with the things we need to live: food, water, shelter, and people who can care for us. Explain that He went even further by providing us redemption and salvation through Jesus and His sacrifice. He provided us with His Word and His church to teach us more about Him. Remind kids how God sees and knows everything we need, even when we might not understand why He doesn't always give us what we think is best.

SAY 🍌 How is Jesus our Redeemer? 🍌

Guide kids to understand that we are born in sin. We cannot earn God's love, so we needed Jesus to save us. Share how redeem means to "buy back" or "pay for." Discuss how Jesus paid for our sin through His death on the cross. Jesus came to earth to live the perfectly obedient life we never could. He died the death we deserved and rose again to show His power over sin and death. He defeated sin and death so we could have new life with God.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: FAMILY OF JESUS

Provide each kid with a “People in the Family of Jesus Spinner.” Guide kids to color the pictures. Then lead kids to cut out each circle. To assemble the spinner, follow the directions on the printable. Review each person and discuss how these people are all in the family line of Jesus. Remind kids that these people weren’t perfect, but God is perfect and faithful to His promises.

SAY ☞ God loves families. All throughout the Bible, we see how God cared for families—even when they sinned and disobeyed Him. God’s plan to send Jesus into the world included using families and promising that one day, a Savior would be born. From Abraham and Sarah to Boaz and Ruth, God was working out this plan. Eventually, God’s eternal Son, Jesus, was born to Joseph and Mary in the little town of Bethlehem. Jesus is our Redeemer who came to save us from sin and death. ☞

OPTION 2: TRUE OR FALSE



Provide each kid with a piece of paper. Guide kids to label each side of their paper as True or False. Explain that you will read several statements about today’s story. If they believe a statement is true, they will hold up True. If they believe a statement is false, they will hold up False. Read the following statements aloud and consider adding more of your own:

- Ruth left Naomi and went back to her own land. (False)
- Boaz provided Ruth with food and safety. (True)
- Ruth was from Moab. (True)
- Boaz owned a grocery store. (False)
- Ruth and Boaz got married and had a son named Obed. (True)

SAY ☞ **GOD PROVIDED A FAMILY REDEEMER FOR RUTH.** Boaz bought back the land for Ruth and Naomi. In a similar way, Jesus bought us back from the power of sin and death. Jesus paid for our sins when He died on the cross. Through faith in Jesus, we can be redeemed! ☞

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.