

## Faithful Friends

### Sunday school lesson: Advent; Ruth 2

Leader's Guide

We are in the season of Advent, and we are studying the book of Ruth. Last week we read the first chapter of this short little book in the Old Testament. Can anyone tell me what they remember from last week's lesson? *<take answers, refresh memories if need be...Naomi's family had gone to live in Moab b/c there was a famine in Bethlehem. Naomi's husband died, her two sons died, and she and her daughter-in-law Ruth return to Bethlehem.>*

So we left off with Naomi and Ruth back in Bethlehem, and everything seems pretty hopeless. What will they do for food? How will they survive?

The last verse of chapter 1 is important for us as we continue the story today. Ruth 1:22 says,

**"So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning."**

So it's the harvest time of year. Let's start reading through chapter 2.

Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, a man of standing from the clan of Elimelek, whose name was Boaz.

**2** And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor."

Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." **3** So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek.

So according to God's law, when farmers were harvesting their crops, they had to leave the edges of their fields available for poor people or immigrants. So when it says that Ruth entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters, it means she is picking up the grain that they left behind. It was God's way of providing for the poor.

The Bible says, "As it turned out," whose field was she gleaning in? *Boaz, a relative of Naomi's.*

Do you think this is just pure luck? Did it "just turn out" this way? *No- God was orchestrating it all.*

Let's continue reading...

**Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The Lord be with you!"**

**"The Lord bless you!" they answered.**

What an amazing greeting. Here comes Boaz, the owner of the fields. Verse 1 told us he's a man of standing, so he's probably wealthy and well respected in the community. And he greets his workers with a blessing!

**5 Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, "Who does that young woman belong to?"**

**6 The overseer replied, "She is the Moabite who came back from Moab with Naomi. 7 She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.' She came into the field and has remained here from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter."**

Boaz obviously knows his workers well because he immediately recognizes Ruth among them and he doesn't know her. What does he ask? *Who does this woman belong to?* He's asking to see if she's part of a group working there--basically who is taking care of her.

**8** So Boaz said to Ruth, “My daughter, listen to me. Don’t go and glean in another field and don’t go away from here. Stay here with the women who work for me. **9** Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the women. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.”

What kindness! Remember that last week we talked about how women who were unmarried or without a father were vulnerable and easily preyed upon. Boaz is offering her protection AND provision! He is making sure she's safe AND that she has work.

**10** At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?”

Ruth is shocked at his kindness. He doesn't have to do this for her. She's not an Israelite. She's from Moab! Listen to why Boaz is showing her kindness...

**11** Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. **12** May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.”

**13** “May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord,” she said. “You have put me at ease by speaking kindly to your servant—though I do not have the standing of one of your servants.”

What amazing kindness Boaz showed to Ruth! Look back at verse 11; why did Boaz show such kindness to her? *He was impressed with how she had cared for her mother-in-law and stayed with her.*

Can anyone tell me about a time when you were shown unexpected kindness? *discuss*

**14** At mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar.”

When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. **15** As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, “Let her gather among the sheaves and don’t reprimand her. **16** Even pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don’t rebuke her.”

*This is just kindness upon kindness! Ruth worked hard all day and then at mealtime she was invited to eat at the table with his hired workers! She was probably so very hungry, and notice she ate all she wanted and had some left over! Not only that, but Boaz told his men to basically do the harvesting for her and let her just follow behind and pick up the stalks they pulled for her.*

**17** So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah. **18** She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered. Ruth also brought out and gave her what she had left over after she had eaten enough.

Ruth went back to work, worked until evening, then took home all she had gathered. She also took those leftovers from her meal at Boaz's table so Naomi could eat them.

Naomi realizes this is more than Ruth could have worked for by herself without some assistance, so let's start reading in verse 19:

*\*\*An ephah is likely 22 dry quarts.*

19 Her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!”

Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. “The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz,” she said.

20 “The Lord bless him!” Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. “He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead.” She added, “That man is our close relative; he is one of our guardian-redeemers.”

21 Then Ruth the Moabite said, “He even said to me, ‘Stay with my workers until they finish harvesting all my grain.’”

22 Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It will be good for you, my daughter, to go with the women who work for him, because in someone else’s field you might be harmed.”

23 So Ruth stayed close to the women of Boaz to glean until the barley and wheat harvests were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

Ruth had no idea that Boaz was a relative of her dead father-in-law. But Naomi recognized his name. Suddenly she is filled with hope. She knows this is a huge blessing. Look back at verse 20. What does Naomi call Boaz?  
*guardian redeemer*

That's not a word we use today, so let me tell you what that means. It's a male member of the extended family who is obligated to rescue a relative if they got into trouble. Just like God's law about leaving part of your field for the poor to harvest, this is yet another of God's laws designed to protect His people.

A redeemer was supposed to do more than just help with money or give advice. A redeemer was to actually own the problem. Redeeming love was a sacrifice! It was a decision to take the other person's helplessness upon yourself.

Does that remind you of anyone? Someone other than Boaz? *take answers...Jesus is our redeemer!*

Let's read John 3:16-17 together:

**16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.**

On the second Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of LOVE.

*\*use electric candles if available\**

Let's read 1 John 3:16 together:

**This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.**

And let's read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. When I come to verse 7, will you read with me?

**4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.**

Reading through Ruth is wonderful for the Advent season because it shows us our own guardian redeemer, Jesus! Boaz is a picture of Jesus...redeemers from Bethlehem.

Let's close by reading the Advent prayer we read last week.

God of hope, who brought love into this world, be the love that dwells between us.

God of hope, who brought peace into this world, be the peace that dwells between us.

God of hope, who brought joy into this world, be the joy that dwells between us.

God of hope, the rock we stand upon, be the center, the focus of our lives always, and particularly this Advent time.

Amen.

*Resources used for this lesson:*

*Finding Hope Under Bethlehem Skies, by Robin Ham*

[www.spiritualeldercare.com](http://www.spiritualeldercare.com)

*Leader's guide, page 7*

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**Ruth 1:22** So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

**Ruth 2:1-3** Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, a man of standing from the clan of Elimelek, whose name was Boaz. **2** And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." **3** So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek.

**Ruth 1:4-7** Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The Lord be with you!" "The Lord bless you!" they answered.

**5** Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, "Who does that young woman belong to?"



**6** The overseer replied, “She is the Moabite who came back from Moab with Naomi. **7** She said, ‘Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.’ She came into the field and has remained here from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter.”

**Ruth 2:8-9** So Boaz said to Ruth, “My daughter, listen to me. Don’t go and glean in another field and don’t go away from here. Stay here with the women who work for me. **9** Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the women. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.”

**Ruth 2:10** At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?”

**Ruth 2:11-13** Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before.

**12** May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.” **13** “May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord,” she said. “You have put me at ease by speaking kindly to your servant—though I do not have the standing of one of your servants.”

**Ruth 2:14-16** At mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar.” When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. **15** As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, “Let her gather among the sheaves and don’t reprimand her. **16** Even pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don’t rebuke her.”

**Ruth 2:17-18** So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah. **18** She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered. Ruth also brought out and gave her what she had left over after she had eaten enough.

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**John 3:16-17** For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-7** Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5** It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **6** Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7** It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Advent Prayer:

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God of hope, who brought peace into this world, be the peace that dwells between us.

God of hope, who brought joy into this world, be the joy that dwells between us.

God of hope, the rock we stand upon, be the center, the focus of our lives always, and particularly this Advent time.

Amen.



## Ruth Chapter 2

Look for the words from Ruth 2.

N P F B C M D O J G F T S E V R A H W Y  
 Q H A U R Y E B K W Z S D Y B B M Q A P  
 F K R N Y Y P E W P V M L E O O Q Z J W  
 G W P D F U M O R I S H E K X X K M E U  
 W E D L U A B D E N J E I O Y M R T J E  
 U Z Z E M N Y F K D D P F K M M M F X D  
 F D I S F V Q E X N I C A Y V N W U E J  
 I Z G U E T E V C A S P Z T S J G Z D T  
 L V S J E Z E I W H Y R O D G W D O A T  
 A C R R O A R T E H E I I N C U R Z V T  
 F V U G A Y L A H D W Z M B O B Z C Z O  
 E T W I X B V L E A R L O D V F A H K O  
 H B A R L E Y E H M S A A G M T I O P P  
 I Y B I S J M R K G Z N N X T H C P I F  
 V Z W O M E N B Q T F U N O Y J W E Y L  
 W V O S R E K R O W V D L Z V G N A C Z  
 Y P M T B L T X W T D V K M E I E F K C  
 Y E B O T S I U B V A K J O M I F X S G  
 Q Z J O S S S E N D N I K S D J I H E U  
 H L C D W W N W C Y D X O F D Y Z M K B

RUTH  
 REDEEMER  
 BARLEY  
 WOMEN  
 SHEAVES

BOAZ  
 FIELD  
 KINDNESS  
 RELATIVE

NAOMI  
 HARVEST  
 WORKERS  
 BUNDLES

