



Mustard Seed Children's Lesson Summary for March 21, 2010
Released on Wednesday, March 17, 2010

"Ruth and Naomi: A Family"

Lesson Text: Ruth 1:1-9, 14b, 16

Background Scripture: Ruth 1:1-16

Memory Verse: "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1:16).

Ruth 1:1-9, 14b, 16

1 Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

2 And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

3 And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons.

4 And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelt there about ten years.

5 And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread.

7 Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

9 The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

....

14b And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.

....

16 And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that we should love our families because God gave them to us.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. Ruth chose Naomi's family because they had helped her come to know God.
2. God put us in our families.

3. God wants us to be loyal to our families and to show them love.

PLANNING LESSON AIDS:

For Telling the Lesson, find a picture of Ruth and Naomi in a Bible storybook.

For Telling How to Live, find pictures of many different kinds of families, thinking especially of the families of the children you serve.

For Helping to Remember, bring a batch of clothespins, fine-tipped markers, glue, chenille wires, and scraps of paper and cloth.

For the lesson activity, make a copy of the Word Search for each student.

TEACHER'S NOTES:

Time: around 1130-1120 B.C.

Place: Bethlehem; Moab

There are many principles we can glean from the book of Ruth, but one of them is certainly the beauty and strength of family, especially godly families.

Ruth was from Moab. The Moabite people were descendants of Abraham's nephew Lot. Although they were related in some degree to the people of Israel, there may have been some kind of jealousy on their part toward Israel, for they had joined in cursing Israel when Israel sought to cross their land (Numbers 22:4-6).

However, Ruth had married an Israelite, a man of Judah, when his family was living in the land of Moab because there was a famine in Israel. At this time she had taken his family as her own family and his God, the true and living God, as her own.

Naomi was Ruth's mother-in-law. Her husband died first in the land of Moab. Then her two sons also died, leaving the three women, Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth, widows.

With all the supporting men gone, Naomi was eager to go home when she heard that God had again given His people food in their own land. She gave Orpah and Ruth the option of staying with their families in Moab.

Orpah eventually took the option, but Ruth clung to Naomi. She had learned to love and serve God in Naomi's family. She chose to stay with the family where she had come to know God, promising to go with Naomi wherever she went.

This can be a sensitive lesson for children who may be in shaky or difficult family situations. When preparing this lesson, keep in mind the family situations of your students. Pray for their family relationships. As you teach, be sensitive to those who may need extra encouragement or a visit from you or the pastor. May God make you an instrument of healing, love, and encouragement for the families of the children you teach.

BEGINNING THE LESSON:

Benjamin was tired of his family. His mother hollered at him a lot. His father was very sick and often in the hospital. He could not play baseball with Benjamin. Sometimes both his parents had to stay at the hospital, and Benjamin's aunt had to stay with them instead of his mother.

She did not get the kind of cereal that Benjamin liked. She did not set the table the way Benjamin's mother did. She made Benjamin do too many chores, he thought, and go to bed too early.

Hospital bills seemed to take all his family's money. He could not sign up for baseball camp. He could not go to church camp. He could not get nice jeans. He had to wear his brother's old clothes.

"Why didn't God give me another family?" Benjamin cried one day. "I want to give this one back!"

Have you ever felt ungrateful for the family God has given you?

Today's Bible story is about a woman who was very thankful for the family she married into. Ruth was one of the people of Moab. They were cousins of God's people, the people of Israel, but many people in Moab did not like Israel very much.

TELLING THE LESSON:

Ruth had married Mahlon, a man of Israel who loved God. They lived close to Mahlon's brother and his wife, Orpah, and Mahlon's mother, Naomi, whose husband, Elimelech, had died. Ruth loved Naomi. From her and from her husband, she learned to know and love and serve the true and living God.

Later, Ruth's husband, Mahlon, and his brother died. Then the three women were alone. Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth were now widows. What would they do? How would they live?

Naomi and her family had come to Moab many years before because it was a time when there was not much food in their own land. When Naomi heard that God had now once again given His people food in their own land, she wanted to go back.

Orpah and Ruth did not come from Naomi's homeland (Bethlehem). They were both women of Moab. They had married their husbands there in Moab. When Naomi told them that she was going back to Bethlehem, she said it was all right for Orpah and Ruth to go back home to their own families and stay in Moab. Orpah kissed Naomi good-bye and left, but Ruth kept holding on to Naomi.

Ruth did not want to go back to her family's home. Naomi was Ruth's family now. God had given Ruth a new family, and she wanted to serve her new family's God.

Ruth begged Naomi not to ask her to go back or to leave her. She saw Naomi as her mother now. (Show the picture of Ruth and Naomi now or whenever is appropriate according to the action shown in the picture.) Wherever she went, Ruth promised to follow her. Wherever she lived, Ruth would call that place home.

Ruth knew that Naomi's people were the people of God. They would be her people too. Naomi worshiped the true and living God, and now Ruth loved Him too. She chose God as her own.

Ruth and Naomi went back to Bethlehem together. They were a family now, and Ruth was very thankful.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

God gives us a wonderful gift when He gives us families. He has given you the wonderful gift of your family. Maybe your family is complete - father, mother, children. Maybe it is not complete. Maybe you live with someone who is not the parent who gave you birth. None of our families are perfect, but they are still God's gift to us.

Was Naomi's family perfect? (Let the children respond.) No, she may have had to leave her own parents when she went to Moab to find food. Then her husband and both of her sons died. She left her son's wife, Orpah, in Moab, where she would probably never see her again.

Was Ruth's family perfect? We do not know anything about the family she grew up in, but they lived in a country that worshiped false gods. Later, her beloved husband, Mahlon, died. She was left a widow. Still, she had Naomi. Naomi was family, and Ruth was thankful for her.

Who is your family? Who is taking care of you? Whoever they are, they will not be perfect, but you can still be thankful for them. You can still pray for them. You can still obey them and show love for them.

Let us ask God to show us how to be kind to our families. (Show pictures of families.) Let us ask God to show us how we can show them love. Let us ask God to help us treat them the way we want them to treat us. Our families are very special

gifts from God. (Let the children give ideas on how to show love to their families.)

If you have a family that loves God, that is a double blessing. Let us thank God for them.

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Have the children take clothespins to represent those in their families or those they live with. Let them decorate the pins to represent their various family members. Then let the children take turns using the dolls to show how they will show love within their families. Be sensitive during this time to notice any problem areas that may need addressing.

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:

"Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1:16)

Naomi was the mother of Ruth's husband. Her own husband had died, and now her two sons died. Ruth had not been a part of God's people. She learned to love the one true God from her husband.

After her husband and sons died, Naomi planned to go back to her own country where God's people lived. She told Ruth that she could go back home to her own family. Ruth knew that the people in her family did not love God; so she answered Naomi with the words of our golden text.

Ruth asked Naomi not to ask her to go back home or to stop following her. She said that she would go wherever Naomi went. She would live wherever she lived. Naomi's people would be Ruth's people because they were the people of God.

Most importantly, Naomi's God would be her God. Ruth knew that Naomi's God was not an idol like those of other people. Naomi's God was the true and living God.

In choosing to stay with Naomi, Ruth was choosing the true and living God as her own.

CONCLUSION:

Families are very important. They are designed by God to meet our needs, to care for us and to make us feel safe. Ruth was a stranger in a new land but found a new family with her mother-in-law, Naomi. Just as Ruth, we have found a new home in Jesus and what He did for us on the cross of Calvary. We were once outside of God's family, but by His grace He has invited us back inside. Now it is up to us to help others find new community in the family of God.

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, we know we don't deserve it, but we are thankful for all that You have done. Thank You for the families that You have given us. Help us to love them and to find very special and godly ways to show this love, in Jesus' name. Amen.

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON:

Next week's lesson is "**Ruth Was Welcomed**" and tells how Ruth was blessed in Israel even though she was a stranger. Study Ruth 2:5-12; 3:9-11.

LESSON SUMMARIZED BY:

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WORD SEARCH

"Ruth and Naomi" (Ruth 1:1-16)

Find each of the following keywords from the lesson:

DAUGHTERS

COUNTRY

BETHLEHEM

FAMILY

RUTH

PEOPLE

WIDOW

NAOMI

MOAB

LODGE

MOTHER-IN-LAW

FAMINE

WORSHIP

BREAD

SERVE

JUDAH

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SOLUTION TO WORD SEARCH

"Ruth and Naomi" (Ruth 1:1-16)

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A E D
F B

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The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson